This month's full ballet guide

Dance and Dancers

NOVEMBER 1956

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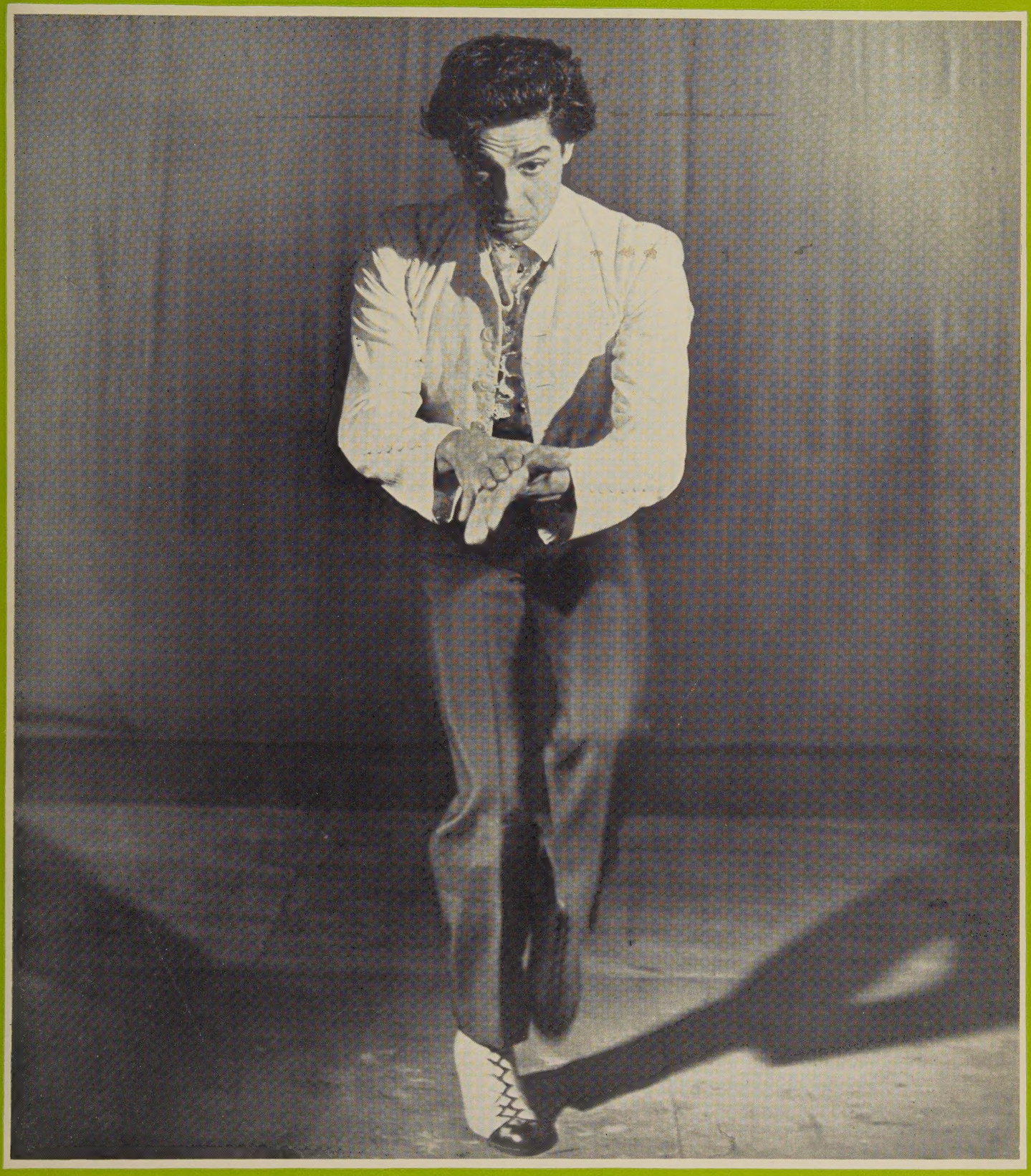

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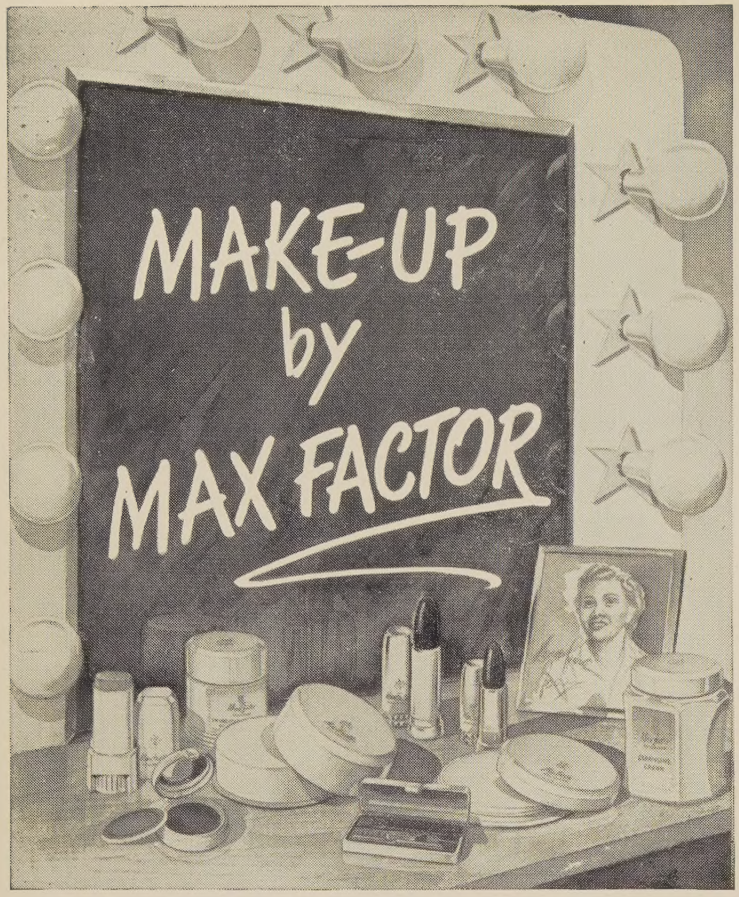

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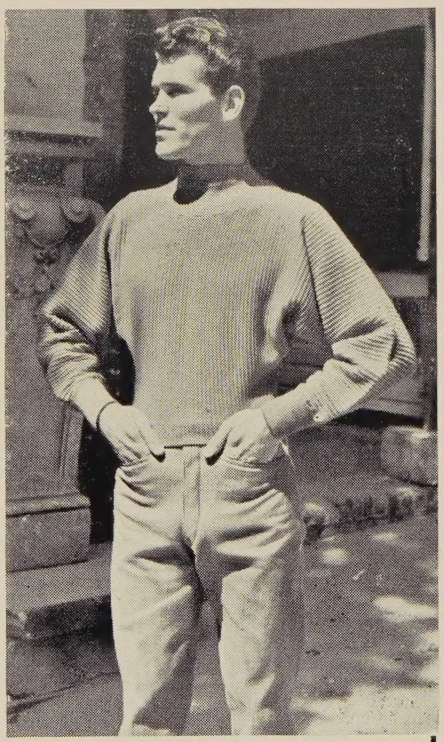

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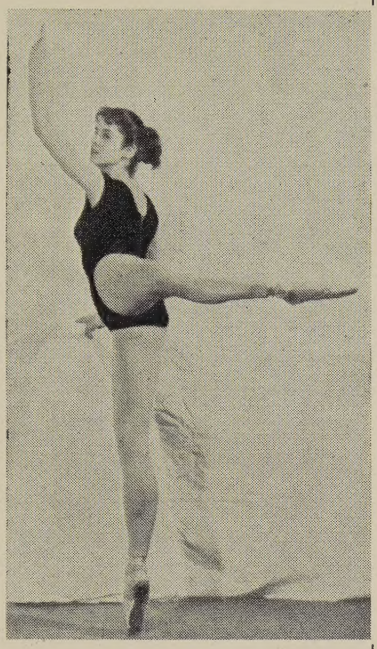

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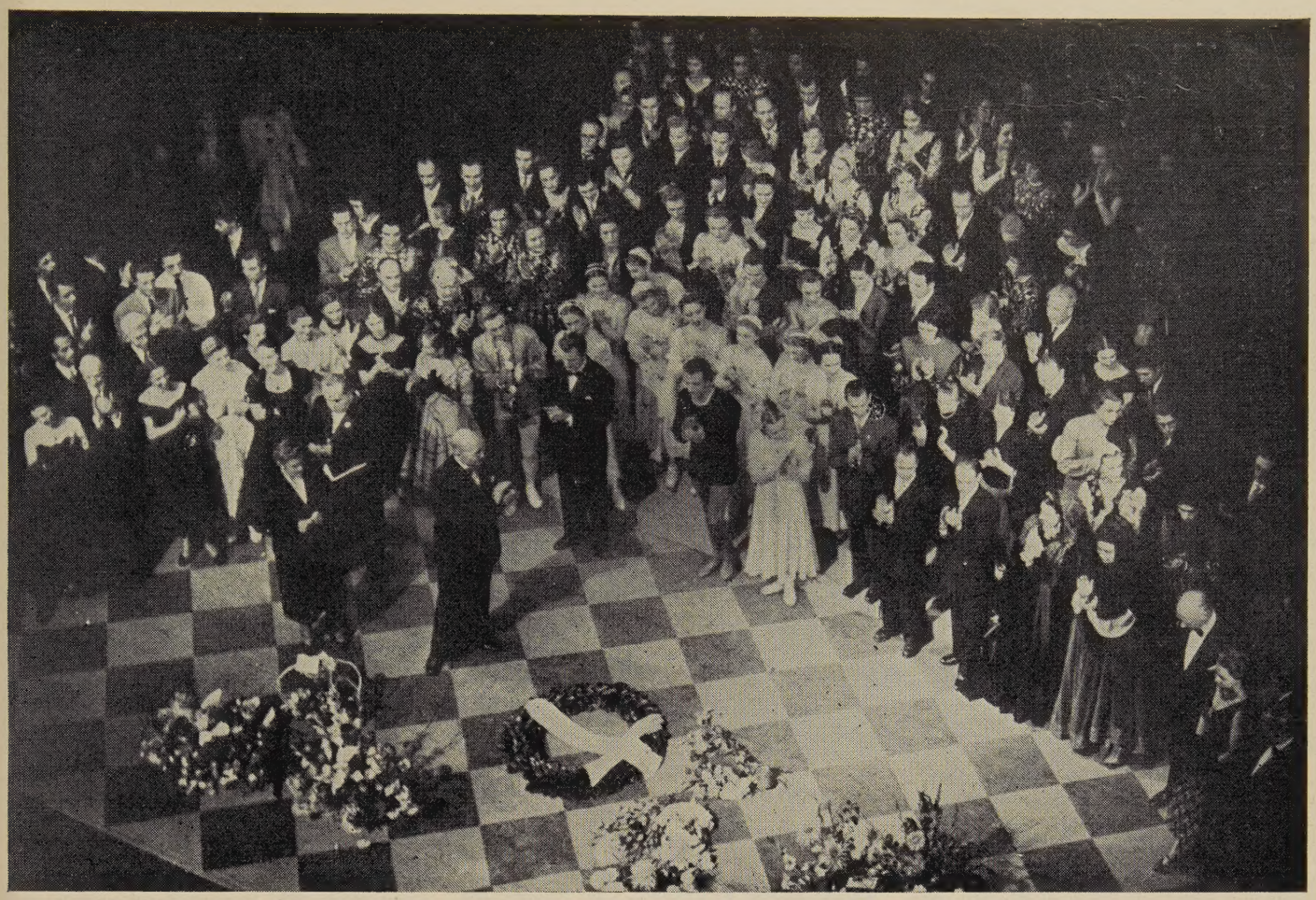

INTERNATIONAL CURTAIN CALL: The entire company of the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet assembled on the stage of Covent Garden after their opening performance on October 3. Galina Ulanova (centre) is seen applauding Dame Ninette de Valois (one from right) who, together with David Webster and Frederick Ashton, was invited by the Russians to appear on the stage with the visitors. *Photo: Brian Windsor*

November 1956 7th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 7 No. 11

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
Assistant Editor: CLIVE A. BARNES
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

Here at last!

"AT last we shall be seeing our mother company," said Russian ballerina Alexandra Danilova when she heard that the Bolshoi Ballet had finally arrived in London. Like many mothers, and ballet ones in particular, this Russian mother had proved to be rather difficult.

Just when all was set for her arrival, up popped the business of Nina and her hats and it looked as though the party was off. For reasons which to the Western mind seemed rather obscure, this unfortunate and over-publicised affair became mixed up with culture (ballet), whereas it should really have only concerned culture (physical).

After 10 days of uncertainty when the matriarchal visit was off and on with a bewildering spate of contradictions and rumours, good sense finally prevailed and the Bolshoi Ballet came west for the first time in 200 years. We are grateful that good sense prevailed and that the Russians decided not to disappoint their eager public in the West. We are equally grateful for the calm and tact with which the Covent Garden Administration conducted the whole difficult business. Also, it is doubtful whether the curtain would have gone up on time had it not been for the miracle performed by the Opera House stage staff. Because of their untiring work, through three days and nights, it was possible to see *Romeo and Juliet* with the sublime Galina Ulanova on the scheduled day. There never can have been a season of ballet so beset by complications all along the line.

Now we have seen "mother," and her presence is inspiring to us all. It is an odd trick of circumstance, though, that we happen to have seen her offspring 47 years before this parental visit. Russian ballet's most distinguished son—Serge Diaghilev—came, and the result of his stay with us has inspired every company in the West ever since. From the Diaghilev Ballet stemmed our own Sadler's Wells Ballet; and now it is in one sense returning to its ancestral home.

This will be no return of a prodigal, but a homecoming when the child can say: "You gave us this—now see what we have done with it. You may not like all we do, because on the surface it is different from what you do. But this is our sincere attempt at building up and enriching all that you have given us."

Whatever the outcome, there is not the slightest doubt that the visit of the Sadler's Wells Ballet to Moscow this month is as much a peak moment in ballet history as the visit of the Bolshoi Ballet to London.

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Buckle at the Bolshoi

ROMEO AND JULIET

Weds. & Thurs. Oct. 3 & 4

WHAT was everybody thinking in the moment before the curtain rose for the first time on the Bolshoi Ballet at our Royal Opera House? We had waited ten years to see them. I was wondering if the Russian dancers behind the red curtain with its royal ciphers—the fourth to be stitched on to it in my lifetime—had heard the peculiar noises made by the brass instruments during the playing of our two national anthems, and whether they were already thinking our poor theatre shabby and second rate.

Were they horrified at the smallness of the stage—and of their dressing-rooms? I imagined that the dressing-rooms in the gorgeous Bolshoi Theatre were as palatial as those of the Paris Opéra, and I felt apologetic. But then—perhaps somebody had already pointed it out to them—*we* never had all those lovely rich emperors.

I wonder if much argument and heart-searching took place before the decision to give *Romeo and Juliet* on the first night was arrived at: possibly it seemed to those responsible to be so obvious a choice as to be inevitable. A Russian ballet on a story by English Shakespeare—Ulanova in one of her most famous rôles—a new (1940) Soviet ballet—a work by Prokofiev—something spectacular . . . Even if it were not the happiest choice—and I must admit I found it on the whole a boring work—no ballet could have revealed more immediately to an expectant world all the merits and defects of the great Russian company and of ballet in Russia today.

Everybody knows that the traditions of Soviet ballet go far back in the history of Imperial Russia, that through revolution and wars the great theatres and dancing schools of Leningrad and Moscow have never ceased to carry on their work of producing ballets and training dancers, subsidised, now as in the days of Petipa and Tchaikovsky, by the State. The value of this tradition and this security was at once evident in *Romeo and Juliet*. Every dancer in the company seemed to be in some measure a thorough artist, every effect was meticulously calculated and rehearsed, the production was impeccable. This company had never been short of good dancers or of money, had never to rush (except, poor things, to open at Covent Garden on time!), had never had too few rehearsals or too many performances.

Then, apart from the excellence of the dancers, there was the fact that they were Russian. It is obviously an advantage for a dancer to be Russian rather than English. Russians tend to be warm-hearted, impulsive and given to expressing their emotions. The English, when they feel anything at all, make every effort to conceal the fact—except of course in the football stadium or on the racecourse. Expression, not repression, is what theatrical artists have to develop. The Russians throw themselves heart and soul into their mime and dance.

The whole point of a great company continuing through the years, maintaining an ancient tradition, is that once in a while, sooner or later, it will produce a choreographer or dancer of genius who will transform or re-inspire it. Just, as in literature the sole function of the writer is to create a masterpiece, so in ballet. Most of ballet is a waste of time, mild entertainment: then a masterpiece is created or a divine dancer appears and we realise what the whole cumbersome machine has been kept running for. The Bolshoi Ballet have Ulanova.

So much for the first obvious advantages of the Soviet Ballet: they have one crushing disadvantage. They have remained utterly untouched by the artistic revolution we associate with the name of Diaghilev.

Nowadays we are all so serious about art that we tend to forget that the greater part of the operas and ballets of the past were meant to be talked through. They were an agreeable background to the conversation going on in the boxes, and if evening parties had begun earlier they would have had to be shorter. Diaghilev made people sit up and take notice of everything that went on beyond the footlights by condensing the maximum of poetry and excitement into short ballets which never allowed the attention to wander. So we got used to looking constantly at the stage and we stopped talking. With *Romeo and Juliet* we are back in 1900. The ballet seems endless, but we daren't talk, so our attention wanders. (It lasts, with intervals, three and a half hours.)

The story of Shakespeare's play is childish and commonplace: it is the poetry which lifts it up into art. I cannot help feeling it was a mistake to make this long ballet out of Shakespeare's story, replacing the poetry with music, dance and mime. Yet who am I to talk? In Russia, in the nineteen-thirties, that was presumably the sort of work the public wanted.

Romeo and Juliet has much more mime than dancing. The mime is there to tell the story. But we know the story. The well-staged crowd scenes become wearisome. One realises that the police in Verona in the fourteenth century were faced with much the same problems as those in Greater London today. Spoilt young men with too much pocket-money go in for flashy clothes and fancy haircuts: this inevitably leads to gang warfare and dancing in the streets.

Apart from the scenes in which Juliet dances *pas de deux* with Romeo, one of the best passages in the ballet is the Capulets' ball, which gives occasion for an impressive cushion-dance for the older guests and a dazzling solo by a Troubadour in silver, danced with great zest by Boris Khokhlov. Another is the climax of Act II. When Mercutio receives his death-wound from Tybalt, Sergei Koren brilliantly dances and mimes an equivalent to his last jesting monologue. There follows an exciting fight between Tybalt and Romeo, Constantine Rikhter and Yuri Zhdanov. After the death of Tybalt and the flight of Romeo, the Capulet clan assembles to carry Tybalt's body away. Lady Capulet climbs on to his bier and is borne with him off-stage. We readily forgive her this rather ostentatious behaviour for the nobility and simplicity which Elena Iliushenko puts into her tremendous gesture of grief.

The choreography of the dances for the lovers is very elementary, and seems almost to have been designed as a simple "frame," as it were, for Ulanova's wonderful acting. The man's rôle is merely to support: this Zhdanov did magnificently. There are numerous "lifts," some of which are unexpected and striking, a lot of darting runs (*pas de bourrée*) ending in arabesque, occasionally some pirouettes taken at flashing speed. The arm movements for Juliet are free and mainly unclassical, perhaps Duncanish.

My first physical impression of Ulanova is of a gentle, yielding thing which is *blown* about the stage. As she speeds by she gives at the waist, and her arms like floating ribbons eventually wind themselves around some solid object—a man or a column—and arrest her flight. Perhaps her style is quite different in other ballets. As Juliet there is something *art nouveau* about her.

Technically speaking, everything she does she does well, but more important than this she gives every movement a meaning. I had the feeling that when Lavrovsky was working out the choreography of the ballet Ulanova must constantly have made him eliminate movements which she felt to have no spiritual significance. She is a superb actress. We first see her as a playful girl with her nurse, then as a shy and dutiful daughter on her best behaviour with an alarming mother. We see her, on being told of Paris's proposal, suddenly realise she is grown up. We see her fall in love, and there is a miraculous moment when her face is clouded with tragedy when she knows by instinct, prophetically, that anything which brings such intense joy as love brings, must also bring suffering, renunciation, the doom of parting, the torture of uncertainty, death.

Ulanova's extraordinary feat of adapting her supposedly lifeless body to the movements of Zhdanov when Romeo picks up and dances with what he believes to be Juliet's corpse, is a triumph of artistry.

Perhaps Ulanova's outstanding quality is her reticence, her lack of showiness. She is so quiet, so dedicated, so self-contained that at times she seems not to give out enough, to be untheatrical. I like her best when I watched her through opera glasses, and thought her special quality would shine in a smaller theatre. But ballet is not danced in small theatres. Her features have a kind of beauty, but an unobvious, unspectacular kind. Even the mousey colour of her hair seems to drag her away from asserting the great star's right to be conspicuous. Surely ballerinas should have black hair!

Raissa Struchkova, who danced Juliet on the second night, was a complete contrast to Ulanova. She is a splendid dancer, but full-bodied and demonstrative. Her facial expressions were too exaggerated.

The scenery for *Romeo and Juliet* was old-fashioned pantomime stuff, absolutely pre-Benois, not to speak of Picasso or Goncharova. I was more impressed by the speed with which the solid steps and terraces, fountains and columns, beds and dining-room tables were whisked away and replaced, than by their lavishness. All the gilt architecture, the cut velvet curtains and fake-Botticelli tapestries rather depressed me; I was quite shocked to see Romeo and Juliet throw their cloaks over the back of a comfortable red velvet armchair—I felt there were sure to be Benvenuto Cellini coat-hangers in the cupboard.

It would be funny if the Sadler's Wells Ballet caused an artistic revolution in Moscow,

RICHARD BUCKLE was for many years ballet critic for the *Observer* and (before it stopped publication) editor of his own magazine, *Ballet*. He directed the fabulous Diaghilev Exhibition in Edinburgh and London in 1954, and has also written several authoritative books on the ballet.

Richard Buckle has written for DANCE AND DANCERS his impressions of the first four works given by the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet at Covent Garden, on their first visit outside Russia in 200 years.

ALICIA MARKOVA arriving at Covent Garden, with Terry Embericos, on the opening night of the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet's first London season. Markova is the first Russian-trained British ballerina so she was naturally interested in seeing the company from which, as a dancer, she is a direct descendant.

MARGOT FONTEYN during an interval of Romeo and Juliet *on the Bolshoi's opening night. Apart from her natural interest in the company, she was no doubt particularly keen to see the company coming from a city in which she will shortly be playing. The Sadler's Wells Ballet, with Fonteyn at its head, opens in Moscow on November 15. Photos: Barratt's*

just as Diaghilev's Russian ballet did when it first came to Western Europe in 1908. Tit for tat.

SWAN LAKE

Mon. October 8

HERE'S one in the eye for all our English experts and guardians of the sacred flame of tradition! How jealously, how reverently, for the last quarter of a century, have they preserved the hereditary choreography of Petipa and Ivanov for that most famous of Russian ballets—*Swan Lake*! How hotly have they debated the correct or the most effective arrangement of its illustrious *enchaînements*! How indignantly, a few years back, did they reject the thrilling version of Balanchine!

Here come the Russians, who should surely have kept every step of the ballet intact since 1877, who must surely—who else but they?—have preserved the golden mould for the immortal *blanc-mange*—and what do we find? They scrapped the original choreography years ago, long before we ever heard of it or saw it in Western Europe. Acts I, II and III, the programme tells us, are by Gorsky, Act IV is by A. Messerer and Alexander Radunsky. There are family likenesses to be caught throughout in the choreography, the Act II *pas de deux* is certainly based on Ivanov's and the Act III *pas de deux* inspired by Petipa's, although these two masters received no credit, but on the whole the ballet is completely different in arrangement to the one we know.

Tachikovsky's score, except for two passages, is still the familiar one, but under the baton of Yuri Faier it was played with a zest we have not experienced since the death of Constant Lambert. How well Faier brought out the dash and abandon of the character dances, the urgent tragic quality of the swan theme!

The first act is certainly more interesting in the Russian version: there is a continuous coming and going, more dancing and a general atmosphere of liveliness. The setting of autumn woods was quite pretty in a conventional way. I did not at once take to the Prince, Nikolai Fadeyechev, who looked like Paul Scofield with a smirk instead of a frown. Radunsky, the choreographer, who played the tutor as a jovial, bottle-nosed scholar painted by Holbein—but *not* as a clown—was excellent. Elena Iliushenko's Princess was friendlier and less ready to take offence than some we have seen. Khokhlov distinguished himself in the *pas de trois*. The peasant dance at the end has become a *Polonaise*, which it sounds as if it always should have been. The poetic ending to the act was spoilt for me by the flight of semi-detached swans across the flies. Can't we be content to imagine these?

In Act II, we saw the Russian *corps de ballet* working as a team for the first time. I say "as a team"—but they are *far* less regimented than our dancers. It was really quite surprising to what an extent they gave full-play to individual expression. True, one saw them rather too obviously "dressing by the right" or "by the front" once or twice, but they don't keep in line as well as our dancers and they lift their legs and arms at many different angles. They seem to be splendid dancers, and in a curious way the irregularity is welcome, as it might be in a clump of trees. They seem more human that way. Perhaps when they see Sadler's Wells they will find our neat rows of obedient virgins as soul-less as a phalanx of Tiller girls. The lake-side setting was rather drab, but I liked the misty effect and the way the swans emerged from almost complete darkness at the back of the stage.

Nina Timofeyeva, who interpreted Odette and Odile, is a fine dancer in the style we begin to recognise as typical of the present generation of Russians. I should call it the impulsive style. No cold formality—every classical movement must be given a heartfelt spontaneity. This must, I feel, be the result of some sort of return to natural movement in the ballet world of the USSR.

Temperamentally Timofeyeva is more suited to Odile than to Odette: in fact, I think she is the best Odile I have seen. She really was captivating. None of the leers and nods we have had so much of in other productions—this Odile was a delightful seductress, voluptuous, intransigent, gay and mocking in turns.

When he came at last to doing his one solo Fadeyechev made a great impression. His style is noble and manly: his double turns were executed with flourish and exactitude.

The men in the Russian company are not all quite the splendid, swaggering Cossacks that, for some reason, I had been led to expect. Certain of them *look* almost as spineless and effete as some of our dancers. I say "look" because I think their wigs and make-up could be vastly improved, and very often deck their virility to poor advantage. Once they start dancing there is nothing to complain of. The Neapolitan, Spanish, Polish and Hungarian dances of Act III were made really exciting. The point, surely, is that one must dance those national character dances unselfconsciously, and one simply can't if they don't come naturally to one. Perhaps Scotsmen are better than English.

The silvery Gothic décor for Act III I liked even less than the architectural sets for *Romeo and Juliet* because it was more imprecise. The costumes are unsmart and unimaginative. I didn't think much of the dawn over the lake in Act IV.

NEXT MONTH Richard Buckle will write about the Bolshoi Ballet's London productions of *Giselle* and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*.

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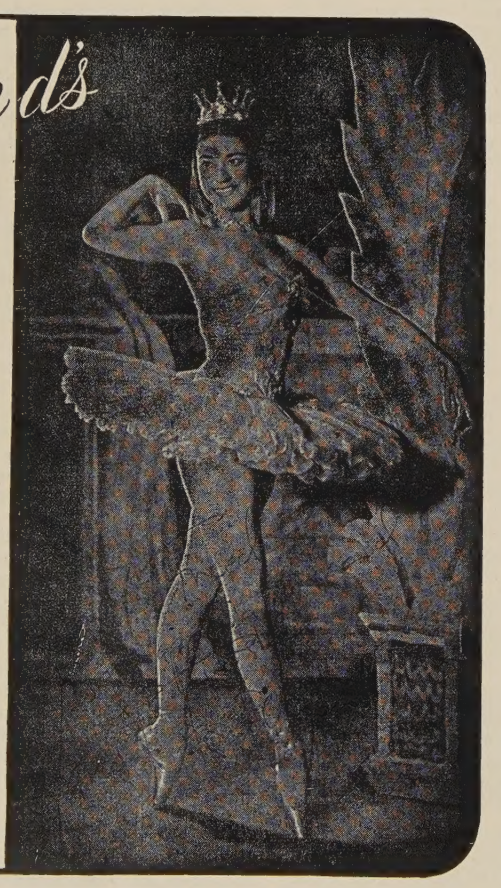

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CHIEF PROTAGONISTS: Galina Ulanova, as Juliet, and Yuri Zhdanov as Romeo in the pas de deux *in the bedroom scene from the last act of the Bolshoi Ballet's* Romeo and Juliet.

PAS DE DEUX*: Another study of Ulanova and Zhdanov, who danced away with the main honours at the first performance of the Bolshoi Ballet at Covent Garden. Photo from Hélène Bellew's book,* Ballet in Moscow Today.

Romeo and Juliet

CAST

Juliet	GALINA ULANOVA
Romeo	YURI ZHDANOV
Mercutio	SERGEI KOREN
Tybalt ..	KONSTANTINE RIKHTER
Paris	ALEXANDER LAPAURI
Benvolio ..	VLADIMIR VASILYOV
Capulet	ALEXANDER RADUNSKY
Lady Capulet ..	ELENA ILIUSHENKO
Montague ..	ANATOLI PAVLINOV
Nurse	IRAIDA OLENINA
Friar Laurence	ERIK VOLODIN
Prince of Verona	NICOLAI GOLISHEV
Juliet's Friend ..	NINA CHISTOVA
Troubadour ..	BORIS KHOKHLOV
Jester ..	GEORGI FARMANYANTS

CHOREOGRAPHY

AFTER the alarms and fears of no excursions that have enlivened the ballet scene during the past month, the first performance of the Bolshoi Ballet could not but come with a certain anti-climax of fulfilment. Nearly all seemed to see what their pre-conceptions had led them to expect, and few appeared surprised or disappointed.

For the most part *Romeo and Juliet* has been greeted with the enthusiasm it deserved. One common conventional reaction, however, was that the ballet was "old-fashioned," although why such an adjective should be used disparagingly—as though a ballet were of no more artistic significance than a C. & A. hat—has not been explained. In a way *Romeo and Juliet* undoubtedly is old-fashioned, but not as fondly imagined by users of that term, who have implied that the company has not advanced since the 19th-century reign of Petipa in St. Petersburg.

Although Diaghilev's ideas (in themselves at first largely expedients) on staging ballets—one-act apiece, the use of easel painters and the appeal to a sophisticated public—have naturally by-passed Russia, Fokine's fundamental re-assessment of choreographic values and the turn towards expressive rather than spectacular dance have not been missed. Indeed, the choreographic revolution that Soviet Russia seems to have missed is the neo-classical revival of Balanchine and Ashton. So it is that Ashton's *Romeo and Juliet* has something more in common with Petipa than has Lavrovsky's.

The further criticism that more mime than dancing has gone into the making of Lavrovsky's ballet would be as valid as the argument that pillar-boxes are red, were it not fallacious. In *Romeo and Juliet* the acting, dancing and dramatic gesture are fused so completely that the man who can separate them out could earn himself a fortune finding needles in haystacks.

Romeo and Juliet is a dance-drama extending over three acts, the production and choreography of which perfectly realise the Noverre and Fokine conception of ballet-making.

The production of the ballet is taut and thrilling, with well-placed climaxes and rapid changes of scene. The complicated narrative is told with fidelity and subtlety. Never have I seen movement so articulate in its statement; even the most literary of ideas (such as Juliet finding that Romeo has drunk poison) are conveyed explicitly in dramatic dance and gesture.

When one examines the choreography two principles must be kept in mind. Firstly this ballet was created for an unsophisticated audience; secondly that the Russians have forgotten more about ballet than we have ever known.

In England the past 25 years have been a continual struggle for technical accomplishment. We have now found our feet technically but have lost our heads—to say nothing of our arms—in the process. The years when we had to foster carefully any kind of technical aptitude have left us, both as an audience and as dancers, with an excessive admiration for quantitative technique. We have a natural predisposition towards choreography that allows dancers to dazzle us with their virtuosity. The Russians have not. After 200 years they know that they have all the technique they need, and feel no compulsion to prove it in every ballet.

Nor do the Russians subscribe to the Diaghilev heresy that ballet is one of the visual arts, and the choreography concentrates on its dramatic import. It is simple because simple choreography is usually the more expressive. Lavrovsky uses, like his composer, a system of *leit-motifs*. Romeo's passion is symbolised by a leap merging into a *double tour en l'air* and ending with the body thrown back on one knee. This step is used triumphantly in the balcony scene, longingly in the bedroom scene, and desperately in Romeo's solo when he hears of Juliet's supposed death. The audience subconsciously recognises the step's re-appearance and knows what it represents. The dancer is left to give it dramatic nuance according to its place in the narrative.

All the characters are depicted in movement. Tybalt, Mercutio, the Capulets, the Nurse and the minor characters, are given substance by the choreography and only life by the dancers.

The one thing the ballet seems to lack is the incandescence of poetry. Apart from the

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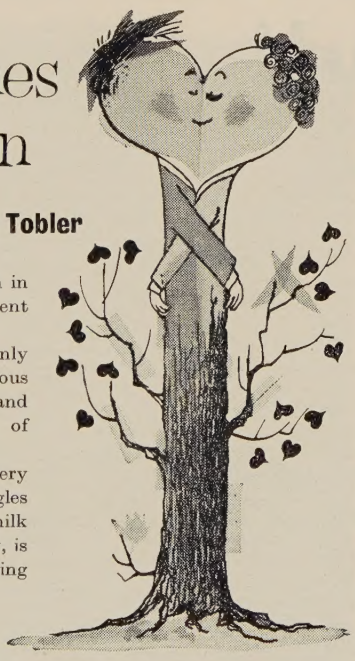

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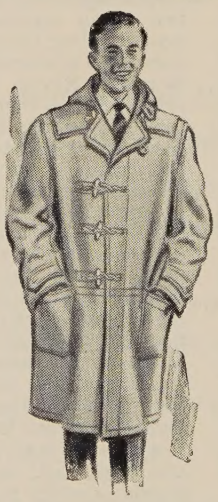

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unforgettable dance of Romeo with the drugged, lifeless body of Juliet, the ballet is prose rather than poetic drama. Beautiful, exquisite, and magnificent prose, warm, passionate and evocative.

Please do not let us underrate what is not familiar. Please do not let us dismiss this work merely as a vehicle for a star. Please do not let us waste our time with fruitless comparisons and so lose the chance of learning the vital lesson that ballet (even the so-called "abstract" ballet) is fundamentally a literary art. Please let us recognise *Romeo and Juliet* as one of the great ballets of the 20th century.

DANCING

ONLY those who expected perfection in an imperfect world could have been disillusioned. The tremendous authority and technical discipline that went into the *ensemble* dancing marked this out as a paragon among ballet companies.

The one aspect of the performance that impressed me most was their effortless identification with their rôles. We are dancers, the Danes are actors, the Russians are people.

Ulanova is everything I ever hoped she could be. One was hardly conscious of her dancing, while her acting was so completely without artifice that even to call it acting is somehow to disparage it. She was a young girl caught up in virginal passion. I know she must be a very great dancer, but I cannot even imagine her in any of her other rôles. Perhaps I was cheated; I went to see Ulanova: instead, they showed me this girl called Juliet.

Following Ulanova, Raissa Struchkova on the second night was very ordinary—merely one of the finest dancers I have seen. Technically she has all the best points of her school, strong turns, marvellous jumps, and a broad eloquence of movement. Her acting was excellent, but her complete success could not but be dogged by the absence of Ulanova. Objectively she was superb, but ballet criticism and ballet going are not objective.

Yuri Zhdanov and Yuri Gofman were the two robust Romeos. Both are consummately good partners (it would only be surprising if they were not) but Zhdanov danced with a little more fire and passion. Neither was afraid to unleash his emotions.

Possibly the best actual male dancing came from Boris Khokhlov. Like the rest of the classical male dancing, Khokhlov's tended to be what we would call untidy, but had a magnificent air of monumental athleticism. All the Russian male dancing in this ballet was human and virile.

Sergei Koren and Konstantine Rikhter, who both shared with the Romeo the duelling honours in the second act, were able to create genuine characters out of Mercutio and Tybalt. Mercutio, in sparkling life and lingering death, is the most Shakespearean in conception, whereas many of the other characters have been slightly re-drawn by the libretto. Tybalt, for example, has been made more brutal in his cruelty than wanton, perhaps in an attempt to give the ballet a more immediate social significance. In the same way the Capulets and Montagues are seen as Patricians and Plebeians, and the mob is given a far more positive rôle than in Shakespeare.

Lapauri's Paris was noble, direct and sincere. He made me realise more than in any production of the play that *Romeo and Juliet* is also Paris's tragedy. The main mine rôles of the two Capulets and the Nurse were given with complete understanding by Radunsky, Iliushenko and Pavlinov. Farmanyants, a little off-form for the first night, danced like a demon as the Jester.

Final judgment on the company must obviously come later. Their style of dancing and, more important, the *raison d'être* behind their dancing, differ so much from Western standards that they could easily be criticised for not possessing technical and aesthetic qualities to which they do not aspire. Yet by any standards they are superlative dancers, an example and a challenge to the West.

When we have a dancer who can flick his cloak with the same authority as Lapauri, then prpbably our ballet will be 200 years old also.

Clive Barnes

MUSIC

PROKOFIEV'S magnificent score for *Romeo and Juliet* was his first full-length ballet, although he had earlier written four one-act works for Diaghilev—the unstaged *Ala and Lolli*, *Le Chout*, *Le Pas d'Acier* and *The Prodigal Son*—while his *Sur le Borysthène* had more recently been given, without success, at the Paris Opéra in 1932.

RAISSA STRUCHKOVA who danced in Romeo and Juliet *on the second night of the season.*

Prokofiev had already begun to shed the discordant severities of his youthful *style mécanique* by 1929, the year of *The Prodigal Son*, and when he finally returned to Russia in 1933 it was as a reformed *enfant terrible* with a taste for neo-romanticism, patriotically resolved to write music of wide and direct appeal.

The score of *Romeo and Juliet* was completed on September 8, 1935, and the first two of Prokofiev's own three suites from the music were published in the following year. There were some criticisms, to which the composer replied that he had "taken special pains to achieve a simplicity which will, I hope, reach the hearts of all listeners. If people find no melody and no emotion in this work of mine, I shall be sorry; but I feel that they will, sooner or later." But when heard in 1940 in its proper sequence in association with the ballet, the richness and dramatic sweep of the music were immediately apparent; and there can be little doubt that this is the finest full-length ballet score since the masterpieces of Tchaikovsky.

One of the most extraordinary things about the Bolshoi production is that although it satisfied one's curiosity about what a Meyerbeer historical opera must have been like more than it gave any true idea of a large-scale Romantic ballet in the Maryinsky tradition, it nevertheless succeeded in achieving the evocative suggestion and pearly radiance of Shakespeare's poetry. The miracle of Ulanova's Juliet apart, the main credit for this must be given to Prokofiev.

For all the detailed opulence of the staging, it is the music that so powerfully sets the scene, sustains and develops the dramatic tension, brilliantly high-lights violence and tragedy with contrasting lightness and delicacy, and adds mystery and poetry to choreography that is, by comparison, for much of the time unimaginative and prosaic.

The skill with which the climaxes are so tellingly calculated and the melodic leit-motifs woven together as so many silver strands in a tapestry of rich and inventive design—everything about the score, in fact, bears witness to Prokofiev's genius as a musician and practical man of the theatre, and to his expert knowledge of the classical ballet technique.

How strange that it was decided to treat such a marvellous score, with its almost unlimited opportunities for dance invention, as the basis for what is primarily a mime drama and that Lavrovsky, brilliant producer though he obviously is, should have failed—at least in such things as the Jester's Dance—to provide his splendid dancers with the bravura range of choreography so clearly demanded by the music.

Justifying his reputation as the finest living ballet conductor, the partially blind Yuri Faier directed a memorable account of the score, drawing playing of such superlative precision and expressiveness from the Covent Garden Orchestra that it seemed scarcely credible that this was the same orchestra that normally plays for ballet at the Garden.

David Hunt

DECOR

IT is odd to be writing about the work of Peter Williams, a designer with whom, in the days when I also followed the same profession, I was often confused. Even if I had not given up designing in order to edit DANCE AND DANCERS, I doubt whether the confusion would continue for having now seen his work for *Romeo and Juliet* it is immediately apparent that he is a craftsman of the kind I could never possibly be—the operative word being *craftsman*. We have few such people left in our Western theatres—people who can create monumental settings using much perspective and ornamental detail. That other Russian, Serge Diaghilev, altered our whole approach to stage decoration. Today, stage designers are painters first and craftsmen later—though frequently never. The first world war hammered the first nail in the coffin of the craftsman-designer and up to this moment he has remained in obscurity—except, apparently, in Russia.

Although my personal leaning is towards the painter-designer whom Diaghilev was the first to use in the theatre and who has mainly held sway ever since, I also find that I can admire the work of those who can create massive and detailed perspective and who adhere to the Edwardian school of realism.

Think, for a moment, just what the point of stage design really is. It is intended to create the right atmosphere and environment for the work concerned, nor should it obtrude or detract from that work. Throughout the three acts and 13 scenes (not to mention a number of front cloths), I never found that Williams' designs, apart from one horrifying exception which I will come to later, did other than create an eminently suitable background for this Gothic version of Shakespeare's Renaissance tragedy.

Comparing the production at Covent Garden with the photographs of the same ballet in Moscow, it is immediately obvious that we saw very much of a touring production. In Moscow, the architecture of Verona looks as though it is constructed with every nook and cranny a fine example of the scene-builder's art. In London, most of these constructed buildings shimmered as in a heat haze when anybody moved violently, which they did on many occasions; the sets had been painted on what looked to be rather thin canvas.

Another reason why the designs did not show up to their best advantage was that they appeared to be almost unbearably cramped on the stage of Covent Garden which, though not small, is possibly only half the size of the Bolshoi. What was intended to suggest a deep vista of buildings, merely look like a huddle of scenery. This, of course, only applied to the exterior scenes; the interior ones looked quite happy, whereas in Moscow they probably had to be masked-in.

I particularly liked the use of different levels and the stage staff, both Russian and English, are to be congratulated on striking so many rostrums and heavy pieces of scenery with such speed and silence—specially after what, for Russian ballet, must have amounted to no real rehearsal at all. During the whole three and a half hours length, I never became conscious of hammering or banging about back-stage, and everything seemed to be in its right place at the right moment.

A number of effects failed to come off and in the street scenes the backcloths should have been back-lit with moving clouds projected on the sky. As it was, these backcloths were deadened with front-lighting and any feeling of perspective was thus lost. At other moments, particularly in the balcony scene, it was difficult to see the scenery at all, though this may have been deliberate. The immense tapestry in the banquet scene looked rather drab, which spoiled the one moment in the ballet when the audience should be overwhelmed with colour and richness. This under-playing of everything was a noticeable feature of the whole presentation.

The simplicity of Friar Laurence's cell was effective, though I could not see why it had to be surrounded by Gothic arches at this period in Italy. I liked also the lack of fuss in Juliet's rather virginal bedroom, which mainly consisted of drapes and a few practical pieces such as the bed, window, door. The best set, by far, was the final one in the Capulet family vault. The fact that Juliet's bier was placed high on a stepped rostrum helped to create two of the most beautiful moments I have ever seen on any stage—when Romeo carries the supposedly dead body, high at one arm's length, back to lay her on the bier, and when the bodies of the two star-crossed lovers are spread over each other in the final moment.

The costumes parallelled the approach to the décor. They were mainly inoffensive and appeared to lack any scheme of colouring calculated to create a mass theatrical effect. The peasant cestumes were memorable in that it is hard to remember anything about them. The nobility were either in stencilled brocade or rather unsuitable lamé. The one aforementioned horrifying moment was when some pages dressed *en travesti* appeared, big-hipped and frizzy headed with diamond ear-rings, and stood about like *figurantes* at the Casino de Paris. At that moment the designing lost its integrity.

Juliet and her friends were dressed in Botticelli-like nightgowns which needed far more imagination and subtle cutting to make them convincing.

In its own way the designing served the ballet adequately enough, but how one longed for someone with the taste, sense of line and colour, such as Leon Bakst, to turn it all into as thrilling a visual experience as Ulanova's performance was from the dancing point of view.

Peter Williams

NEXT MONTH the DANCE AND DANCERS team of critics will give their opinions on the choreography, dancing, music and décor of the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet's productions of *Le Lac des Cygnes*, *The Fountain of Bakhschisarai* and *Giselle*.

In addition to this there will be reviews of the Bolshoi Ballet's performances at the Davis Theatre, Croydon, where they give three performances on October 31, November 1 and 2. Ulanova appears at each in *The Dying Swan* and the Chopin *Waltz*. Struchkova dances the Moskowshy *Waltz* and *Walpurgisnacht* from *Faust* with male *corps de ballet*. Also in the programme are *The Sailors' Dance* from *The Red Poppy*, the *Polonaise* and *Krakoviak* from *Ivan Susanin*, the *Gopak* from *Taras Bulba* and the *pas de deux* from *Casse Noisette*.

THE COVENT GARDEN ROAR: Yuri Zhdanov leading Galina Ulanova forward over the floral tributes to acknowledge the roar of approval which greeted the company, and Ulanova in particular, after the final curtain fell on the first performance of the Bolshoi season. But this rarely-heard roar was not confined to the opening night, becoming a crescendo *as the season continued. It should not, however, be thought that the Covent Garden audience was unqualified in its acclaim—there were several moments in the various ballets which were received tepidly. This audience, in fact, proved itself to be the soundest of critics.*

COPPELIA *IN ACTION: (Top) John Gilpin, as Frantz, and Belinda Wright, as Swanilda, in the final* pas de deux *from the last act of Harald Lander's production of* Coppélia *for Festival Ballet. (Bottom left) The* corps de ballet *in the* Mazurka *from Act I. (Bottom right) Swanilda and Frantz reunited in the finale.*
Photographs taken during the actual performance.

Coppélia

First produced by London's Festival Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall on August 31, 1956.

Ballet by C. Nuitter and A. Saint-Léon, staged by Harald Lander. Music, Léo Delibes. Decor and Costumes, Jean-Denis Maillart. The original choreography freely adapted and arranged by Harald Lander.

CAST

Swanilda	BELINDA WRIGHT
Frantz	JOHN GILPIN
Dr. Coppelius	RUSSELL KERR
Swanilda's Girl Friend	ANITA LANDA
Frantz's Friend	LOUIS GODFREY
The Mayor	PETER WHITE

Friends, Gypsies, Townsfolk, Dolls, etc.

CHOREOGRAPHY

THE ballet audience must be the most unadventurous in the world. Always they seem to want the same old ballets, with the sad result that in the not so far distant future the time may come when each of the four major British companies will have virtually the same repertory.

One cannot altogether blame the companies for a lack of enterprise when they are merely acceding to what are the obvious demands of the box-office. In the present instance Festival Ballet has acted imaginatively, for instead of re-producing the old Sergueeff version, well-known in England and favoured by the three other companies, they have invited Harald Lander to mount the Danish production of the ballet.

No ballet has had a more varied history than *Coppélia*. First produced in 1870 by Arthur Saint-Léon, since that date it has been chopped and changed about by a bewildering succession of ballet-masters. There are today three basic versions extant. The Paris Opéra version, according to Ivor Guest, has apparently undergone only minor modification since the days of Saint-Léon. I discussed the ancestry of the Sergueeff production at length in DANCE AND DANCERS last May. It may be assumed, I think, that the *Coppélia* danced in Soviet Russia at least derives from the same sources as the Sergueeff.

The history of the Copenhagen *Coppélia* started with a ballet-master named Glasemann, who in 1896 went to Denmark from Germany to produce the ballet at the Royal Theatre. Unfortunately I have neither been able to discover who Glasemann was, nor where he got his version of *Coppélia* from. Was it, one wonders, at all similar to the version taught Dame Adeline Genée by her father and later produced for the Empire Ballet in London? Certainly it was in *Coppélia* that in 1902 Dame Adeline made her only appearances with the Royal Danish Ballet.

Whatever the mysterious Glasemann's choreography was, what it was not was the Danish *Coppélia*, for before the ballet's first performance in Copenhagen, Glasemann left the country and the reigning Danish ballet-master, Hans Beck, took over the final rehearsals. It was apparently Beck, inspired no doubt by his apprenticeship in the Bournonville tradition, who was responsible for the new emphasis on character dancing.

The first performance of this production was on December 27, 1896; it achieved its hundredth performance at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen in 1903 and its three-hundredth in 1951. The original Swanilda was Valborg Borchsenius, and she was partnered by Hans Beck as Frantz.

When Harald Lander was appointed ballet-master to the Royal Danish Ballet in 1932, one of his first concerns was to restore and

refurbish the old Danish repertory. In this task he was considerably helped by Valborg Borchsenius, and, to a lesser extent, by Hans Beck. In 1934 Lander produced a new production of *Coppélia*, in which the rôle of Swanilda—then danced by Margot Lander—was notably modified. For this production new designs by Ove Chr. Pedersen replaced the original *décor* and costumes by Carl Lund, and it is this version that has been in the Danish repertory ever since.

The fundamental difference between this Copenhagen version and the one with which we are familiar is the predominating part played by character dancing in the Danish production.

Swanilda's Friends are transformed from cute little fairy-dolls into strapping village wenches with a taste for the Czardas. The *divertissement* of the last act is freed from the pious *Prayer* and dingy *Dawn* variations, and Swanilda and Frantz are released from the responsibility, imposed on them by Sergueeff, of suddenly assuming at the ballet's eleventh hour the mantle of ballerina and *premier danseur*.

Admittedly Swanilda still dances on point, but the general effect is to turn a classical ballet into a peasant fiesta.

Apart from this major difference in approach there are innumerable other smaller divergencies between the two productions. Frantz, for example, is better established as a character by the Danes, and the treatment of Swanilda's impersonation of Coppélia in the second act varies markedly, for whereas Sergueeff left no doubt that the Doll was supposed to have come to life, the Danes are at pains to suggest throughout the act that the "Doll," although animated, remains an automaton.

Both of these approaches to *Coppélia* have their particular advantages. The Danish scores heavily with its gay, realistic background to the story, and its more logical presentation of the principal characters. On the other hand the sugar and spice of Delibes music often seems to cry aloud for conventional classical choreography. In any case some of the dances abandoned by the Danes, those charming variations for Swanilda's Friends for instance, have distinct merit on their own account.

On the whole I personally favour the attempt at a compromise that has been made by Ninette de Valois in her recent revision of Sergueeff, even though the ballet's balance, notably in the last act, is still too heavily weighted towards classicism.

In mounting his version for Festival Ballet, Harald Lander has made a number of further amendments from that current with the Royal Danish Ballet. Nearly all of these are attributable to the size and scope of the fresh company, although a few, like the male *pas de sept* led by Frantz in the last act, may represent second thoughts on Lander's part.

All in all this makes an interesting and unusual acquisition to the English repertory, and Festival Ballet who have already put us in their debt by acquiring a tiny fragment of the Bournonville canon, are once more to be congratulated.

We in England have much to learn from the Danish Ballet, and it is good to see part of its tradition crossing the North Sea to our shores. Perhaps one day Festival Ballet might prevail upon Lander to produce *La Sylphide* for the company.

DANCING

TO an extent every choreographer must be in part a teacher, the more so, perhaps, when he is reviving an old ballet for a new company. The style of dancing required by his *Coppélia* must have been strange to the Festival Ballet dancers, and both they and him are to be praised for the good account they were able to give in the ballet after comparatively few rehearsals.

Belinda Wright proved temperamentally a natural for the rôle of Swanilda. Although it is possible that her dancing would have been shown to better advantage in the Sergueeff production, her lighthearted characterisation was exactly right, and her performance had the attack and *élan* of the true soubrette.

The other Swanilda seen during the production's first week, was Toni Lander. Not unexpectedly her early Danish training fitted the style of the choreography perfectly, and her cool, crisp technique with its splendid turns, jumps and beats was given full scope. Lander was witty where Wright was funny, but the company is almost equally lucky in both its Swanildas.

Like Wright, Gilpin would probably have been happier in the more classical version of the ballet, but he danced the character steps cleanly and with buoyant vigour, while his acting was intelligent throughout. Flemming Flindt, Lander's partner, also danced well, though without the polish of Gilpin. His characterisation of the rôle, however, was well-conceived, and helped to confirm the excellent impression he has made during the whole season, his first in London.

The character of Dr. Coppelius is, following the Danish practice, made serious, but eccentric rather than sinister. Russell Kerr gave a careful interpretation of the rôle the outlines of which still need a certain amount of filling in. With a little more experience this could become a portrayal of a far higher standard than its present well-schooled competence. The part has also been danced by Kenneth Sudell, but I have not yet had an opportunity to see his performance.

Clive Barnes

PEASANT WOOING: Two studies of Belinda Wright and John Gilpin, as Swanilda and Frantz, specially photographed by Roy Round.

A SECOND CAST WOOING: Toni Lander, as Swanilda, and Flemming Flindt, as Frantz, who headed the second cast of Harald Lander's Coppélia *for Festival Ballet. They are seen in Act I on the left; in Act II in the right-hand picture.*

DECOR

OF all the full-length classics given regularly in the repertories of today's ballet companies, *Coppélia* is the one ballet to be saddled with the most unfortunate decoration it would be possible to imagine. Usually this charming ballet is seen as a kind of *Chauve Souris* charade with stylised twisty-twirly houses and an air of such absurd fantasy that all the characters immediately become puppets, manipulated, one imagines, from the flies by a group of puppeteers from Gargantua. Where all is fantasy, fantasy cannot exist.

At the Paris Opéra, where the whole thing started, they still have two quite charming realistic sets. In Copenhagen they also have two realistic sets, though realistic in a more musical-comedy way. A few years ago at Covent Garden a compromise was attempted between the prevailing toy-town approach and Franco-Danish realism; and Osbert Lancaster achieved what was by far the most satisfactory British version up to that time —though even in this version the costumes tended towards musical comedy Bohemia.

Jean Denis Maillart, in designing Harald Lander's Danish version for Festival Ballet was confronted by a problem which the ballet's previous designers had not had to face—the long, shallow Festival Hall stage. In this respect he has scored a great triumph, never has this awkward platform been transformed so charmingly.

His settings are all in monochrome grey. A great panorama of foothills, leading up to distant mountains, sprawls across the width of the stage. This landscape is dotted with occasional mansions and hamlets. In the foreground is a village of well painted houses in the traditional positions—Coppelius's house on the prompt-side, Swanilda's house and a tavern on the O.P. side. The only fault to be found here is with the perspective of some of these houses: those in the foreground look rather low.

Against this neutral background it is possible to put as many bright costumes as can be piled on to the stage. Though personally I did not like all of Maillart's colour schemes for the peasant girls—magenta and lime green are apt to make me feel ill—the whole crowd when gathered together makes a very gay effect and achieves a real feeling of fiesta. Nor has Maillart overloaded his palette: by putting all the male dancers in black and white or brown and white he has prevented the other costumes from becoming too garish, while also helping to relate the dancers to the setting. The silhouette of the girls' costumes, from their wreathed heads to their booted feet, is particularly good.

The only unsatisfactory costumes are for some gypsy girls in scarlet and shades of orange, their entrance for the Czardas striking an unnecessarily discordant note—they are gypsies of *Maid of the Mountains* vintage. This is a pity, as all the surrounding townsfolk—the mayor, and the inn-keeper etc.—have been realised in authentic Hungarian style. Swanilda's knee-length embroidered blue dress is just right and so is the costume for Frantz, in grey, though perhaps there might have been a slight change for him for the festive junketings at the end.

It is in the second act, in Coppelius's workshop, that the ballet achieves its greatest distinction. Here is a dusty attic with a ceiling in a state of considerable disrepair; in gloomy corners it is possible to glimpse examples of the dollmaker's art. It is exactly the kind of place where an old eccentric might secretly indulge his fantasies. For the first time in any British *Coppélia*, the dolls really look like dolls, and not like dancers dressed up. By the use of heavy low beams, this room takes on a size that might well belong to the house whose exterior we saw in Act I. Some people complained that the light was so dim during part of this act that they could not see some of the dolls. But why should they? Surely if the dancers can be seen, the dolls should merely be suggested in the background.

The lighting in this second act was, I thought, particularly good. In the first act there was a tendency to spot the panorama with various colours and, worse still, to introduce a killing red when the Czardas girls came on—an old musical comedy device which one hoped had died when *Oklahoma!* arrived. However, at later performances all this had been modified somewhat, if not completely eliminated.

With all these faults, Jean-Denis Maillart has achieved the best designed British *Coppélia* so far.

Peter Williams

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Baron, is of Antonio in one of his Flamenco numbers.

ANTONIO (Antonio Ruiz Soler) was born in Seville. At the age of five, he started to study at the academy of Realito, where he was joined by his cousin Rosario. They also studied at the schools of Pericet, Otero and La Quica. Their first public appearance was at a recital given by the pupils of Realito at the Teatro del Duque in Seville. Later the pair appeared at the Liège Fair.

Their fame grew and they became famous on both sides of the Atlantic. Although they had made one appearance on British television, the first public performance in Britain of Rosario and Antonio took place at the Edinburgh Festival in 1950. Then followed two triumphant London season.

In 1953 the couple parted, each to form their own companies. In 1954 Antonio returned to London, to the Stoll Theatre, surrounded by a group of young dancers and with Rosita Segovia and Flora Dalbaicin as his partners. In the following year, he came again, but this time to the Palace and Saville Theatres, and with a more mature company. In the meantime, the company had toured in all parts of the world.

The great success of his company, now giving its third London season of two months at the Palace Theatre, is proof of its added maturity.

Antonio himself is one of the great contemporary stars of the theatre, for not only is he a magnificent dancer and personality, but he also does the choreography, designs the costumes and even composes some of the music for his Spanish Ballet Company.

SCALLOP SHELL DUET: Rosita Segovia and Antonio in the Pas de Deux *from* Fantasia Galaica, *in which both dancers scrape shells together as an added accompaniment to the dance. The folk music from Galicia was arranged by E. Hallfter.*

Photo: David Sim

Antonio develops his company

The opening programme given by Antonio and his Spanish Ballet Company at the Palace Theatre, London, on September 16, showed a group that has grown in stature over the past year.

THE development of Antonio over the past five years might one day make an interesting study for the dance historian.

At first in his memorable partnership with his cousin Rosario he was the virtuoso dance recitalist *par excellence*. The darling of the "gods," the angel of the critics, and the saving grace of the box-office, Antonio rode crest-high on the wave of his almost universal acclaim.

Following the break with his partner, he did a thing that seemed strange at the time; he formed a company. Then it appeared as if despairing of finding an adequate substitute for Rosario he had for the moment abandoned the idea of having a regal consort and made himself president of a puppet republic. The company itself was not very good and its dances were far from ambitious.

When the company appeared in London for the second time, last year, it was obvious that since its earlier visit it had undergone a very necessary improvement, Antonio was still unquestionably the star of the proceedings, but the company itself showed unmistakeable stirrings of life. When, after a spectacularly successful season at the Palace Theatre, the company crossed Cambridge Circus for a further few weeks at the Saville, it was significant that the principal addition to the repertory was a new ballet, *El Amor Brujo*, rather than one of the suites of dances Antonio had previously favoured.

Company in evidence

On September 18, Antonio embarked on another London season, and the tendency towards a company rather than a dance recitalist supported by an *ensemble* was even more evident than before.

Antonio is not just the leading dancer. He makes himself responsible for all the choreography, designs most of the costumes and, this season, has even composed some of the music. In fact, as someone rather ungenerously put it, he does everything but dance. It is a fact that since he has put himself at the head of a company his own appearances as a dancer have grown progressively fewer.

However, all this, together with the development his company has made, strongly argues against the original idea that all Antonio was interested in was forming a troupe to frame and support his own talents. As time goes on it becomes increasingly obvious that his sincere intention is to form a Spanish ballet company —perhaps, who knows, a Spanish national ballet.

There are, of course, French, Russian, American and English ballet companies, but with all of these the emphasis is on the ballet and not on the nationality. Spanish, and for that matter Indian, ballet is different: it is based on Spanish national dancing. Instead of its choreography coming from one branch or other of the great genealogical tree of academic theatrical dancing, it restricts itself within the confines of the Spanish national idiom. Certainly it is not pure folk dancing, or even a simple theatricalised version of the folk dance tradition, but draws on national dancing for its inspiration much as does the Russian Moiseyev Ensemble.

Popularity brings success

Antonio's is not, of course, the first attempt to form a Spanish ballet. Pilar Lopez, and before her, her sister Agentinita, have been working for years along similar lines. But as Antonio is undoubtedly the most popular of Spanish dancers (although not necessarily the best) his attempt will draw the most publicity, and, in a sense, have the best chance of success.

Unfortunately, and this is what the first programme of his present season showed more clearly than anything else, the nearer he gets to success the more hopeless his task appears. He now has an accomplished and good-looking troupe of dancers. He has enough money to dress them well and can afford a moderately good orchestra. He himself is an experienced choreographer and producer with an invaluable flair for the theatre. But he is still confronted with two apparently insoluble problems.

The first is to introduce choreographic variety into Spanish dancing. His present programme is extremely well-balanced, and has plenty of variations of mood and pace. But the actual choreographic vocabulary employed is still limited in scope. Recently Antonio has been introducing classical ballet classes into his company's training, and this is a development that could possibly be extended. Another improvement might be the employment of other choreographers, among them some schooled in the classical tradition.

More variety needed

Also he has to vary the nature of his programmes even more if the name Spanish Ballet is to mean anything more than a convenient programme label. There are still too many suites and divertissements for a serious company and his attempts at dramatic ballets have not been particularly successful. There are many good passages of Spanish dancing in his version of *El Amor Brujo*, but the work never really gells as a genuine ballet. The story does not arise from the dancing.

Yet this season does show a step forward in

WANDERING SOULS: Another moment from Fantasia Galaica *with Segovia and Antonio as souls looking for eternal peace.*

Photo: David Sim

Antonio's progress towards his possibly unattainable aim. The choreography of the *Fantasia Galaica* and the delightful (Dolin-inspired?) *Pas de Quatre* are the two best pieces of choreography he has so far shown us. His company has also developed, not only the young boys and girls in the *corps de ballet*, but also Rosita Segovia, who this season has established herself as a true star.

Perhaps in 10 years time Antonio will have evolved a ballet idiom as individual to Spain as, say, Jerome Robbins's is to America. Certainly it can now be seen that his relationship to his company more resembles Dolin's than Pavlova's, and that if anyone is capable of producing an indigenous Spanish ballet he has the best chance of success. **Clive Barnes**

The New Programme

SINCE Antonio formed a company around himself three years ago, his programmes have been in the nature of a curate's egg—good in parts, with the "edible" parts being supplied by himself as a dancer. His recent programme, opening at the Palace Theatre on September 18, is an egg worthy of a vicar—good all through. With a company matured to the point of being completely acceptable and a programme that was finely balanced between flamenco, regional and classical dancing, it amounted to an evening of Spanish dancing with which few people could quarrel.

Albeniz's *Triana*, for three boys and three girls, makes a satisfactory if not particularly exciting opening number. It was danced with commendable precision by all concerned.

Suite from Galicia

The other recent creation in the first part of the programme was a suite based on dances from the province of Galicia in North Spain—*Fantasia Galaica*. Antonio has achieved a theatricalised arrangement of folk dances that have enormous charm and amount to some of the best choreography he has done for the company. Two of the numbers—*Arrieiros non son hommes* and *Maruxiña o teu refaixo*—are delightfully sung by Rosita Segovia. Six girls, dressed in brilliant scarlet and with milk churns on their heads, clatter around, beating out the rhythm with their clogged feet in *Muñeira*. Another *Muneira* is given by four boys who leap and turn with the precision of the Moiseyev Russian troupe.

The most unusual number in this suite was a *pas de deux* inspired by the Galician legend of the *Santa Compaña*, in which Antonio and Segovia danced barefoot to the percussive sound of scallop shells. This dance of wandering souls looking for those about to die so that they can light their way to eternal peace, had great tenderness. It made a good contrast with the more boisterous numbers and to the very lively *Alborada*, given by the whole company, which brought the suite to its conclusion.

Some of the grouping was most inventive and each dance flowed nicely into the other with almost the quality of a ballet by Balanchine.

Classical dancing for four

The other novelty was the *Pas de Quatre* given by Rosita Segovia, Carmen Rollan, Graciella Vazquez and Alicia Diaz. The only slight anachronism here was that the 18th-century music, arranged by Pablo Sorozabal, did not seem quite in keeping with the choreography or the costumes, both in the style of the 19th century.

In costumes based on lithographs of Fanny Ellsler in *Le Diable à Boiteux* and of Pauline Duvernay, each of the soloists had a delightful variation. Their soft *port de bras*, the crispness of their *entrechats* and their general deportment showed a complete understanding of the classical Spanish school of the last century. It was obvious that the ballet mistress, Ana Ivanova, had put in a lot of work here; in the same way that her presence was noticeable in the high standard of the whole company.

SPANISH PAS DE QUATRE: *Rosita Segovia (back) with Alicia Diaz, Carmen Rollan and Graciella Vazquez in Antonio's classical Spanish* Pas de Quatre *which was one of the new creations for the London season. The four dancers were dressed in costumes based on Romantic lithographs of the last century.*

The music of 18th-century composers — Mateo Albeniz, Father Narciso Casanovas, Father Felipe Rodriguez and Father Mateo Gallos—was well arranged by Pablo Sorozabal.

Photo: Photowide

What was particularly interesting in *Pas de Quatre* was the invention that Antonio achieved in each of the *soli*. They showed him up as being more than just a fine arranger of Spanish dances.

The remainder of this first programme was mainly familiar. Seeing his version of Manuel de Falla's *El Amor Brujo* again it was noticeable that the whole work, which had its première at the Saville Theatre last year, had been tightened up all round. As Candelas, the ghost of whose lover comes between her and her next man, Rosita Segovia gave a sensitively thought-out performance. She danced very well and managed to make her dancing express the character of the tormented girl, as well as helping the complicated narrative on its way. With an un-starlike lack of selfishness, Antonio has given the dominant male role to Paco Ruiz who, as the Spectre, gives a forceful performance during his brief moments on the stage. Oddly enough Antonio's own role of Carmelo is rather shadowy in conception.

I shall never get used to the clatter of many castanets superimposed on such a graphic score, and it is here that the work's great weakness lies. A more experienced ballet choreographer could possibly achieve equal effect through movement and without such a deafening clatter.

Two worthy partners

Apart from the dances already mentioned, Antonio appeared in *Por Mirabra*, with which he opened, and later in a *Seguiriyas* with Carmen Rojas. The former is a splendid example of the *Cante Grande*, the oldest group of flamenco serious songs. No further words from me are necessary to describe the perfection of his dancing. It is still a wonder of the dance that he can bring so much perfect precision coupled with a unique personality to everything he does. In the *Seguiriyas* he has found a splendid flamenco partner in Carmen Rojas. Her snaky arms and the passion with which she enters into all flamenco work make her the perfect foil for Antonio. In this programme she was not used enough, and although it was a relief not to have too much of any one type of dancing, a fact which was marred many such programmes in the past, her presence in a solo capacity earlier in the evening would have done no harm to anyone.

It is gratifying to see how much the company and its presentation have developed over the past year. Not only is it a handsome group, but there seem to be none of the weak elements which are usually found even in the best regulated companies. There was a time when it looked as though Antonio would find no partner to replace Rosario. Now, in the enormously improved Segovia and in Carmen Rojas, he has found two. What is more, the rest of the company has grown up to his level, and various of its members stand out as potential stars of the future—notably Antonio's cousin, Paco Ruiz, and Carmen Mota, who gave *Por Serranas* with such fire.

When Diaghilev said that in any future productions of Fokine's *Scheherazade* the colours would have to be twice as bright if the ballet was to create any impact at all, he was probably also referring to the state of dance as a whole. Antonio has realised some of this by bringing a company which was twice as good as it was last time it was here. **Peter Williams**

SPANISH INVASION

Next month Antonio's further programmes will be reviewed, including his new creations, *By the Guadalquivir* and *Taberna del Toro*.

Another Spanish company, Luisillo and his Spanish Theatre Company, is opening a London season at the Prince's Theatre, and this also will be reviewed in full in December.

At Christmas, Jose Greco and his Spanish company open a three-week's season at the Festival Hall. London has seen a lot of Spanish dancing in the past few years, but never have so many companies from Spain appeared in this city within such a short space of time.

CELESTIAL MEETING: The Prince (Ram Gopal) and the Princess (Shevanti) are again united, in the full glory of their youth, in paradise. The final scene of Ram Gopal's ballet, which depicts the story of the building of the Taj Mahal in dance form using the different schools of Indian dancing. Satyavati, as the sister of the Princess, is seated in the foreground. *Photo: Paul Wilson*

The Legend of the Taj Mahal

First produced by Ram Gopal's Indian Ballet at the Empire Theatre, Edinburgh, on September 6, 1956. First given in London at the Royal Festival Hall on September 17.
Choreography, Ram Gopal and Yogen Desai. Music, Rajani Laffhia. Décor, Frieda Harris.

CAST

The Young Prince	RAM GOPAL
The Young Princess	SHEVANTI
Maulvi, a Preacher Saint	YOGEN DESAI
The Peacock	SATYAVAN
Sister of the Princess	SATYAVATI
Aurangzeb	NAMBOODRI
Storyteller	PHIROZA

Courtiers, Ladies-in-Waiting, Peasants

THE STORY

ONE spring day in the beautiful Shalimar Gardens a Princess is playing together with her friends. Their dances are interrupted by a Prince and his hunting party. The Prince kills the Princess's pet peacock. The Princess is upset by this but Maulvi, a holy man, sees a good omen in the incident. He tells the young couple of a great future ahead of them, and they leave the gardens together.

Some years later the Prince and Princess are rulers of India. The Emperor is holding court when a messenger arrives to tell him of the Queen's illness. The dying Queen is brought in, and as she dies in the Emperor's arms her last wish is that he should build a great monument in remembrance of their great love.

The Emperor becomes the prisoner of his son Aurangzeb. Having built the Taj Mahal for his wife he planned to build a black marble tomb for himself, but is prevented by his son. On his death bed he is tormented by ghosts of his days of glory.

Because of their undying love the Emperor and his Queen are reunited in Paradise in the full glory of their youth.

PRODUCTION

ONE has heard of the Kathakali dance dramas that go on all night and more. It might have been thought that *The Legend of the Taj Mahal* was an abbreviated version of one of those ballets of classical Indian dance. Yet that I doubt, as this new work bears every indication of being specifically conceived for the Western stage.

So far as one can judge, Ram Gopal has aimed in this, his first full-length ballet, at combining choreography derived from classical Indian dancing and folk sources, within the framework of a Western ballet. In fact, in one very important respect this work has more in common with Massine's *The Three-Cornered Hat* than it has with the Indian classical dance drama.

The work's intentions are more natural than practicable. Indian dancing must of its nature suffer on the Western stage from the subtlety of its method. Its narrative technique, said by its disciples to be the most efficient in all ballet, is chiefly entrusted to hand gestures (*mudras*) which demand detailed study before they can become intelligible to the Western theatre-goer.

Ram Gopal has possibly reduced the use of *mudras* down to a bare minimum in this work, but the choreography, apart from a few rare instances, cannot be said to be altogether expressive. The work's failure to make clear its story was emphasised by the use of a narrator to read out a synopsis before each scene.

The choreography has a strong affinity to Western styles, especially in the dancing Ram Gopal has arranged for the *corps de ballet*. However, the general impression left, as with all attempts to fit national dancing into ballet, is of a severely limited dance vocabulary.

What is best about the ballet is certain individual dances, the peacock in the first scene and some of the solos arranged by Gopal for himself, which would be just as effective in a solo recital.

The evocation of the period of Shah Jehan is left principally to the designs, and luckily these for the most part have an oriental splendour. Based on Rajput and Moghul paintings the décor and costumes are extravagantly beautiful. The dresses, notably the gold and silver swirling skirts, made an unforgettable sight.

Frieda Harris has been conscientious in her backgrounds, which in themselves have considerable taste and delicacy. Unfortunately the stylised backgrounds she has provided do not fit in with the unstylised costumes, so the presumably desired effect of an Indian painting is lost. Honor Frost handled this problem with far more tact with her designs based on

Persian miniatures for Celia Franca's ballet *Khadra*.

I find it difficult to say anything about Indian music apart from the fact that it is Indian. The present "score," however, not only inevitably sets the right atmosphere, with its markedly varying rhythms it also gives the choreographer considerable scope.

Ram Gopal's present company, far larger than any similar Indian group we have seen here, is of an obviously high standard. Gopal and Shevanti have powerful stage personalities, and all the dancing was graceful and elegant.

In an introductory programme note Ram Gopal expresses his fears that "the Hindu dance is in danger of becoming a 'museum piece'." Such a danger is inherent in any classical art form, yet as an outsider I cannot help feeling that this danger might be better averted by concentrating on revitalising the art itself rather than apparently adapting it to appeal to different audiences. Our own ballet is in danger of becoming a "museum piece," yet I do not think that an attempt to make it palatable to, say, the Japanese would be a very adequate safeguard against its fossilisation.

Clive Barnes

Mixed programme at Festival Hall

BEFORE Ram Gopal first came to England in 1939, very little was known in Britain about India's dances. We had been grateful for the visits of Uday Shankar and his company but our knowledge of the dance itself and the four main schools of Indian dancing was pathetically sparse.

It is entirely due to the unceasing work of Ram Gopal in this country and to the way he has explained so much both in lectures and books that it is now possible for a considerable number of people to appreciate more than just the exotic colours of the costumes and the undoubted beauty of some of the movements of this ancient dance.

The great success of his new, enlarged company during their Festival Hall season must have been mainly brought about by the spade-work which he has put in over the past 10 years. It is no easy matter to fill nightly a 3,000 capacity hall with a form of dance whose finer points cry out for an intimate atmosphere.

The size of the building must have dictated the programme with which the season opened on September 10 and it was probably wiser to concentrate on broad effects. With the Indian orchestra ranged across the back of the stage, occasional pieces of occasional scenery and a number of suitably dressed supers sitting around to fill out the stage's CinemaScope width, a feeling of vast numbers was achieved. The quality was left to the five principal dancers.

It was a great pleasure to see again Ram Gopal's two previous partners, Shevanti and Kumudini, and to welcome to London a Kathakali dancer with a great personality—Satyavati. The principal male element was supplied by Ram Gopal himself and that jolly bouncing drummer Anura.

After an effective opening—*Sahaja* (*Where Each is Both*)—which introduced the company, there followed a rather bloodthirsty fragment of Kathakali by Namboodri and Satyavan which included a fight and disemboweling. Used as we are to the more gentle side of these dance dramas, this came as a surprise. It made effective if rather violent theatre.

Apart from a comic horse dance—*Katchi Ghori*—the remainder of the first part of the programme was mainly familiar. By far the most interesting section was that devoted to dances of the Tanjore temples. Here we see some of the purest and most beautiful movement in any of the schools of Indian dancing and each of the dances was given with great artistry by Shevanti, Kumudini and Ram Gopal.

The second half of the programme opened with Anura and the girls in a Kandyan Dance, which in the past was only performed by male dancers. Here one rather missed the striking mirrored costumes and virile movements of the men.

Outstanding in this part was *Sita Apaharan* (*The Rape of Sita*), another Kathakali fragment, given with great expression by Satyavati as the unfortunate lady.

It is impossible in a programme of this kind to avoid a certain amount of monotony, especially considering that, to the Western ear, the music is repetitious. The *corps de ballet* also seemed rather ragged at the opening performance, though no doubt this improved later. But there is no doubt that Ram Gopal has now formed the strongest group that he has yet shown us and possibly, like the company of Antonio, the years will bring maturity and the rough edges will be smoothed off.

If we criticise the fact that some of the dances have become rather westernised, then it is necessary to remember that it is essential for him to come to grips with his audience. The successful result of this first London season with his new company has proved that his policy is right. Having gained his audience, it might then be possible for him to give us longer excerpts of *Kathakali* dance dramas and also more examples of *Bharata Natyam*, of which he is an undoubted master.

The fact that he has mounted a full-length work—*The Legend of the Taj Mahal*—is a step in the right direction. In this way it is possible to bind the different schools of Indian dancing together with a narrative and thus make the great art of his country into a far more acceptable theatrical presentation that can be understood by everyone.

P.W.

DEATH OF A PEACOCK: The Princess (Shevanti) is upset when the Prince (Ram Gopal) kills her pet Peacock (Satyavan). An incident from the first act of The Legend of the Taj Mahal.

Below: *The Prince (Ram Gopal), now the Emperor, holds court and hears of the death of his Queen. A scene from Act II.* *Photos: Paul Wilson*

Celluloid Transfer

The dancing and choreography in current film musicals.
by DAVID VAUGHAN

WE seem to be in for a spate of screen versions of stage musicals, of which *Carousel* was the first to arrive—though it was not the first to be made. Two more Rodgers and Hammerstein shows, *Oklahoma!* and *The King and I*, are currently to be seen, and so is Samuel Goldwyn's movie of that brilliant "musical fable of Broadway" *Guys and Dolls*. *Kismet* is presumably being held over until the successful London run of the show finally ends, but an MGM picture of it has been made, directed by Vincente Minnelli, with choreography by Jack Cole.

Among other shows of which movie versions are in preparation are *The Pajama Game*, which Stanley Donen will direct for Warners with Bob Fosse as choreographer, and an MGM version of Cole Porter's *Silk Stockings*—here a full circle is completed since this show is of course based on the MGM picture *Ninotchka*, which gave Garbo one of her most unforgettable roles. In the film Cyd Charisse will appear in the Garbo role, opposite Fred Astaire. We may assume that film versions of other successful Broadway shows—*My Fair Lady*, *Damn Yankees*, *The Most Happy Fella*, *Fanny*, *Plain and Fancy*—will follow in due course.

CAROUSEL: *Jacques d'Amboise and Shirley Lucky in the Dream Ballet sequence. As in the stage version, the two principal actors were doubled by dancers in the ballet scenes. Photo:* 20th Century-Fox

OKLAHOMA!: *Gene Nelson as Will Parker in the* Kansas City *number from the film of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. Agnes de Mille has given more importance to the dancing in this number for the film than was originally the case in the stage version. Photo: R.K.O.*

It is perhaps too early to predict with any certainty how closely these films will follow the tendency exhibited in the new musicals now on view, which is to make a more or less straight transcription of a stage show into CinemaScope. However, the tendency is marked and is, I think, to be regretted. What makes it likely that future film musicals will follow this pattern is the fact that in the case of a very successful stage musical the screen rights are apt to cost anything up to a million dollars, and it seems that having paid this much for a property the producers cannot bear to throw any of it away.

But shows like *Oklahoma!* and *Carousel* started a revolution in stage musicals—particularly in the field of dance. Balanchine, in *On Your Toes* (1936), had introduced the word "choreography" to Broadway, and he was followed by Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins, Michael Kidd, Hanya Holm, and other serious choreographers who made dancing an integral part of the musical, and not just another embellishment.

Retrogressive presentation

It is a pity I think that now these shows are at last reaching the screen they are being filmed in an essentially retrogressive way. The revolution in stage musicals had an effect on Hollywood in such memorable films of the forties as *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *The Pirate*, *Good News*, *On the Town*. In those days, when a film was adapted from a successful stage show, as in the case of *On the Town*, the adaptors did not regard the original show as something sacred, unalterable, they made something new out of it for the screen. This willingness to experiment seems to have been lost.

It is also true I think that another contributory cause to the staginess of these new films is the fact that they are filmed in CinemaScope. I suppose that to wish for a return to what Gene Kelly has so justly called "the classic proportions" of the small screen would be as pointless as to wish for a revival of the horse-drawn bus as a means of public transport, but there is no doubt that films in CinemaScope seem to have a very ponderous and unwieldy quality.

The lightness and gaiety of films like *On the Town* was achieved as much by fluency of camera movement and *allegro* cutting as by song and dance: there was an overall rhythm in the film that made the flow from dialogue to song to dance to chase, following now this character, now that, natural and easy. In a word, it was cinema.

In their different ways *Oklahoma!*, *The King and I*, and *Guys and Dolls* resemble nothing so much as animated souvenir programmes of the Broadway productions. None of the films quite has a life of its own, though each can be enjoyed up to a point—if you happened to care for the original. Some changes have of course been made. *Oklahoma!* at least has the advantage of having been filmed mostly out of doors—in Arizona—but this arrangement has its disadvantages, too,

for all too often what was acceptably "corny" on the stage seems just false and rather stale when exposed to the fresh air.

In *The King and I* the changes are even less far-reaching. One or two of the songs are left out and there is a brief attempt to establish some Siamese local colour at the beginning.

In *Guys and Dolls* some of the songs have been replaced by new ones specially written for the film by Frank Loesser and none of the new numbers is quite up to his best standard, I think. The director and screenwriter, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, has for some reason felt it to be necessary to rewrite the dialogue in a kind of expanded paraphrase of the original, and the result is a film so garrulous one feels it should have been retitled (remembering an earlier film of Mankiewicz) *Guys and Dolls Will Talk*.

In each of these films the dances have been staged by the choreographer of the original show. In *The King and I* and *Guys and Dolls* Jerome Robbins and Michael Kidd have been content with reproducing more or less exactly their stage choreography—or perhaps this is

OKLAHOMA!: *James Mitchell, as the Dream Curley, and Bambi Linn, as the Dream Laurey, in the long ballet sequence. Photo: R.K.O.*

all they were asked to do? The enchanting *Small House of Uncle Thomas* ballet is certainly the most handsome sequence in *The King and I*, and the entry of the royal children is as touching as ever. Very sweet too is *Getting To Know You*, with its Balanchinean hand-holdings—but these numbers are familiar to us from the stage show. Personally I feel a little cheated that Robbins was not asked to recast some of these musical numbers in a new form for the screen. It is hard to believe that so original a talent as his would not have come up with some interesting new ideas.

The dancing cast of the film incidentally includes Yuriko and Michiko from the original company; discussion of the dancing in this picture would be incomplete if I did not mention the splendid performance of Yul Brynner as the King. Apart from his delighful Polka with Deborah Kerr (*Shall We Dance?*), the simplicity of this number is of course sheer genius. His movements throughout the film are of a beauty and elegance rare indeed among contemporary actors.

Michael Kidd has already given us convincing proof, in such films as *The Band*

OKLAHOMA!: *Bambi Linn, in wedding dress, with the* corps de ballet *in another scene from the Dream Ballet. Photo: R.K.O.*

GUYS AND DOLLS: (*Above*) *Dancers as cats in the night club scene.* (*Below*) *The* corps de ballet *in* Luck be my Lady, *the famous crap game ballet. Michael Kidd is responsible for the choreography. Photo: M.G.M*

Wagon and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, of his ability to stage dances specifically for the screen. It is interesting to note that Kidd is now to embark on a new career as a director with the forthcoming Danny Kaye film *Merry Andrew*. But in *Guys and Dolls* the dance numbers are again not significantly different from the originals, except in the case of the new night club number that replaces *A Bushel and a Peck*; also the Havana dance is much abbreviated, which is all to the good. It is especially disappointing that only a perfunctory attempt was made to integrate the Crap Game dance into the dramatic action. As it is this number only holds up the story at a rather important point, and its *divertissement* nature is emphasised by the fact that so much of it is in unison.

Agnes de Mille at least seems to have been aware that it was necessary to re-create the dances for *Oklahoma!* in terms of the screen, and she has been notably successful with the Kansas City number, which is now danced on a railroad station—in fact it ends up with Gene Nelson actually on a moving train. *Many a New Day* too is a very pretty number, danced by the girls alone inside the farm house and some exquisite Early American interiors have been designed by Oliver Smith; though I rather regret the little girl with pigtails, now replaced by two girls with (surely anachronistic?) urchin-cuts.

But I am afraid the big Dream Ballet has been ruined by CinemaScopic inflation. It is immensely long and in places too obviously derivative, both from de Mille's own dances and those of other choreographers, notably Antony Tudor and Martha Graham. I have to confess too that I am unable to take seriously the spectacle of Rod Steiger lumbering through the ballet as the gloomy villain, Jud—the other principals of course have doubles, as on the stage. Steiger's performance as a whole offers further proof that the fashionable Actors' Studio style of acting is not suitable for all kinds of role, particularly when the other actors in the film do not affect the same set of mannerisms. Steiger apart, Agnes de Mille has assembled a notable company of dancers for this picture, including Bambi Linn and Marc Platt (veterans of the original company), James Mitchell, Jennie Workman, Kelly Brown, Charlene Baker, Raimonda Orselli and Stanley Hall.

Kelly's experiment

THE dancing in Gene Kelly's *Invitation to the Dance* comes into a rather different category from the dancing to be found in most musicals—even the modern kind where it justifies its presence by playing some part in the development of the action. In Kelly's film the action is wholly depicted through dancing and pantomime. The intention of the film is presumably to provide on the screen the equivalent of a programme of ballets, and hence to prove that such a thing can be done and still be "entertainment." Many critics have praised the courage of this attempt.

The truth of the matter is, I am afraid, that the enterprise was not so much brave as foolhardy. Two factors, it seems to me, doomed this picture to failure before a foot of film was shot, and these factors are inherent in the nature of the conception. In the first place, there are few choreographers indeed who can

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GUYS AND DOLLS (*top*): *Jean Simmons and Marlon Brando with two dancers in the Havana night club sequence. Photo: M.G.M.*

THE KING AND I (*Middle and bottom*): *Two scenes from Jerome Robbins'* Small House of Uncle Thomas *ballet which has effects obviously influenced by Kabuki drama.*
Photos: 20th Century-Fox

stand up to the test of a full programme of their ballets, and Gene Kelly is not one of them. His choreography for the screen has become increasingly repetitive over the last few years, and his invention has to be spread much too thin when he is faced with the task of choreographing three ballets, each lasting half an hour.

Secondly, there is this question of "entertainment," and what this word means in Hollywood. For the front office of a large movie studio it means aiming at the lowest common denominator of public taste. Gene Kelly is one of those rare creative people in Hollywood who have, in the past, contrived to make pictures that were entertaining to the mass-audience and satisfying to the more discriminating minority. Unfortunately, when he tries consciously to make something artistic he ends up with something arty.

This criticism must in this new film be extended to cover Kelly's own performance, particularly in the first ballet, *Circus*, in which we find him as a lovesick clown who dies trying to prove to his beloved (Claire Sombert) that he can emulate the prowess on the high-wire of his rival (Youskevitch). In the past, we have enjoyed Kelly most when he has portrayed the joys and sorrows of the ordinary guy—as in the ebullient rain-dance from *Singin' in the Rain* and the *alter ego* dance from *Cover Girl*. He has enchanted us too with his sympathetic understanding of the child's world of make-believe—as in the street games dance from *Living in a Big Way* and the dance with the adorably grave little Mexican girl from *Anchors Aweigh*. In an *adult* world of make-believe, by *Limelight* out of *Les Enfants du Paradis*, Kelly is somewhat less engaging. We have all heard of the clown who wants to play *Hamlet*—here Kelly goes one better and tries to be clown and Hamlet rolled into one. What makes his performance embarrassing is not that his talents are unequal to the task, but his own clear conviction that they are more than equal to it.

All the same, there are some enjoyable moments in this ballet: Sombert is a beautiful dancer and her *pas de deux* with Youskevitch does display her lovely extensions. Youskevitch is less well served: he has a rather conventional classical variation, but his role is hardly developed dramatically at all. The *corps* of clowns, in Elizabeth Haffenden's charming Callot-esque costumes, includes several first-rate British dancers.

The second ballet, *Ring Around the Rosy*, is derived from *La Ronde*, though without acknowledgments. It would be expecting too much, no doubt, to ask for satire of contemporary sexual morality, but without this the story loses most of its point. What satire Kelly does attempt is directed at rather easier targets, such as cry-baby crooners, sandwich-eating ballerinas, and man-eating blondes. Kelly's blues *pas de deux* with Toumanova as a pathetic tart was not intended as satire, I presume. Those with a macabre sense of humour, however, will find this as irresistibly comical as a cartoon by Charles Addams.

The classical dancers in the cast of this ballet all seem somewhat out of their element. Diana Adams's aristocratic elegance is wasted on a jivey duet with Irving Davies, and Claude Bessy is not quite able to bring off the joke of her *pas de deux* with Youskevitch. Belita, on the other hand, is very funny as a *femme fatale*, and Tommy Rall's flashy solo is danced with his usual brilliance.

The third ballet, *The Magic Lamp*, is an up-to-date Arabian Nights tale, in which Kelly and a small boy (David Kasday) dance with cartoon figures. The blend of cartoon and live action was done with more charm, I think, in *Anchors Aweigh*. *The Magic Lamp* is tedious choreographically and visually quite hideous.

THE KING AND I: *An interesting* corps de ballet *group from the* Small House of Uncle Thomas *ballet.* *Photo: 20th Century-Fox*

INVITATION TO THE DANCE: (*Above*) *Gene Kelly and Tamara Toumanova in* Ring Around the Rosy. (*Below*) *Kelly, centre, and dancers in the* Circus *ballet.* *Photo: M.G.M.*

CURTAIN WELL UP: The large crowd of guests at the on-stage party given by the Administration of Covent Garden after the first night of the Bolshoi season on October 3. In the foreground can be seen Margot Fonteyn; her husband, Dr. Roberto de Arias, is facing the camera with a glass in his hand. Other ballet celebrities who can be seen are: Serge Lifar, Maryon Lane, Philip Chatfield, Ram Gopal (in cloth of gold), Alexis Rassine and David Blair. How many can you pick out?

curtain up!

That first night

"IF a bomb dropped on this opera house," declared tartan dinner-jacketed Anton Dolin, "then America would rule the world of ballet." He was speaking about the company back stage and the many great dancers in the audience who were at Covent Garden on October 3 to welcome the Bolshoi Ballet. It was true because, with the world's most eminent ballerinas in the audience and Galina Ulanova and the famous company she leads on the stage, several generations of dancing could have been wiped out in a moment. It seemed as though all London had converged on Bow Street.

Margot Fonteyn, in a long flame-coloured dress, was in the middle of the grand tier with her husband. Alicia Markova, looking about 20 in black, was with her sisters in a box (incidentally she got an astounding press the next morning, her picture appearing in almost every paper). Beryl Grey and Nadia Neria were with their husbands, and Svetlana Beriosova was with Philip Chatfield. Anton Dolin was with Serge Lifar. Among other ballet celebrities I saw were Dame Adeline Genée and Lady Keynes (Lydia Lopokova). The list would fill a sizeable *Who's Who* on the dance.

The great mystery of the evening was who could possibly be dancing at the Davis Theatre, Croydon, where the Sadler's Wells Ballet were then appearing. Most of the company seemed to be in the audience. What was more, they amounted to the best-dressed people there. "I told them to put on the 'works'," said Michael Somes when I congratulated him on the sartorial elegance of his company.

Apart from the perfection of Ulanova's performance as Juliet, one of the most moving moments of the evening was supplied by someone no longer a dancer—Dame Ninette de Valois. The Russians insisted that she, Frederick Ashton and David Webster took a call with the whole Bolshoi Ballet. Twice did Dame Ninette curtsey to Ulanova in her enthusiasm for the great ballerina.

After the curtain had finally fallen at about 11.30, the stage was cleared for a party, given by the administrators of Covent Garden, to meet the Bolshoi Ballet.

The guests from the audience arrived at the party by crossing two bridges temporarily slung across the orchestra pit. The crowd was so great that it took at least a quarter of an hour to get food or drink from the buffets which ranged around the back of the stage. It must have been one of the biggest ballet parties ever given. Some of the dancers were unable to fight their way to the food before it had disappeared, though Lady Keynes managed to get two helpings of Lobster Mousse.

Every few yards there were little huddled groups of people surrounding the Russian dancers and those who could speak the language and act as interpreters, such as Svetlana Beriosova, were much in demand. Many people were disappointed that Galina Ulanova was nowhere to be seen. She had, however, stayed to greet the Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden; she also met Lady Olivier (Vivian Leigh). An official stated that Ulanova did not like parties, but anyway after several hours of performance in *Romeo and Juliet*, coupled with first night nerves added to the fact that she had rehearsed into the small hours of that morning, it was a wonder she could stand on her feet at all.

I asked Serge Lifar why he had left the Paris Opéra, as had been announced in the press the previous day. His reply was that he resigned because he disagreed with certain matters to do with the administration of the Opéra and particularly that various dancers had been dismissed without him being consulted. He would make no comment as to what his future plans would be.

Several photographers present had cause for complaint because they were forbidden to take photographs of the party in spite of the fact that most of the Russians had cameras and were using them the whole time.

Nevertheless, the party must have been a huge success because the guests refused to leave. Eventually, a moment after Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin had walked back over one of the bridges on their way home, David Webster had to tell the remaining guests, "We love you all but we would love you much more if you would go." Immediately conversations were stopped in the middle and the rather shame-faced stragglers departed. Peace at last descended on the Opera House, a peace only broken by the sounds of the caterers cleaning up.

Agony

HERE are two paragraphs from the personal column in *The Times:*

BOLSHOI—Single ticket wanted, swap two good tickets Liberace, October 17.—Write Box H1282, *The Times*, E.C.4.

BOLSHOI seats for tenancy flat, controlled rent, London. Retired major. He likes commons like Clapham.—Write Box D624, *The Times*, E.C.4.

Dolin's holiday

SOME people lie in the sun for their holidays, others are like the proverbial busman—they just do the same as they always do. Take Anton Dolin, for instance. You would think that after a long season at the Festival Hall, the culmination of many months of foreign touring, he would go and relax somewhere. But no! He spent the time putting on another production of *Giselle*.

Already he must have staged this classic in more countries than most of us can ever hope to visit. The latest addition to this list is a production for the Jugoslav ballet company at Split. Ana Roje, director of the celebrated School of Ballet in Split, danced the title role. Albrecht was played by Myles Marsden, a young protégé of Dolin.

No dancer of Dolin's impulsive personality and strong theatrical style will ever be without critics, but it should be recognised, even by his detractors, that Dolin has devoted himself whole-heartedly, not simply to the pursuit of personal fame, but to passing on the rich tradition he inherited in his early days with Diaghilev.

Markova was right

DOLIN'S partner of many years, Alicia Markova, turns up in all kinds of places these days, and particularly on the television screen. I was delighted to find her on the TV programme *What's in the Picture?* which, although she did not dance, gave us an opportunity to see what a vivid television personality she has. The object of this quiz programme is to say what or who is in the pictures that are shown. Not only did Markova name correctly the personalities in the picture of Pavlova and Mary Pickford—admittedly not difficult for her—but she also avoided the catch when she was asked what film Pavlova was making at that time. Markova immediately realised that the photograph was taken at a time when Pavlova was not making a film but was staying with the Fairbanks. She also put the panel right about another picture from the film *Metropolis* in which she emphatically declared that the figure was not that of the famous German film-star Brigitta Helm. Argument ensued but after the programme was over it was found that—as usual—Markova was right.

Everyone will be happy to know that at Christmas she is to dance again in the play *Where the Rainbow Ends*, at the London Coliseum.

167 and still spinning

I SAW in *The Times* recently a report about a man who claims to be 167 years old. He was flown from his native Colombia to New York to appear in a television programme called *Believe It or Not*. Doctors who examined him confirmed that he "was indeed a very old man, and that possibly he may be more than 150 years of age." They went on to say: "His muscles are small but very strong. He shakes hands with vigour, he is able to stand on one leg and pirouette."

More than could be said about some dancers a tenth his age!

Britons abroad

IT is heartening the way British dancers, teachers and choreographers are being eagerly sought after all over the world. A dancer pioneering in foreign lands is Anthony Burke, formerly a soloist with the Sadler's Wells companies and Original Ballet Russe. He is currently touring Indonesia, giving dance concerts with an Indonesian partner. He is to mount two new ballets in that part of the world and put on a new production of *Coppélia*.

Alfred Rodrigues, ex-Sadler's Wells dancer and choreographer, works a lot in Italy now. Having mounted *Romeo and Juliet* on home ground in Verona and *Cinderella* at La Scala, Milan, he is now putting on a full-length production of *Casse Noisette* at the great Milanese opera house for Christmas. This spectacular production, which will use all the resources of the immense stage, has been designed by James Bailey.

Another choreographer for whom many foreign companies have been vieing is Kenneth MacMillan. He is to mount a new work for Ballet Theatre. Lucia Chase was anxious to take a European ballet back to America with her after her company's long European tour. She chose MacMillan and he is to work on this while Ballet Theatre give their Christmas season in Monte Carlo. The work will possibly have its world première in Lisbon, and its American première at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York.

It is possible that MacMillan will use Britten's *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, in which case he will be the third British choreographer to use this music, as Ashton used it for Ballets de Paris and Cranko for Ballet Rambert.

Ill-timed disapproval

THE Covent Garden audience is quite unpredictable. One American ballerina, dancing rather below her best form on the first night of Ballet Theatre's recent London season, was booed for her pains. A few nights later, she danced splendidly in one of the most difficult roles in any repertory. The result—more boos.

A few weeks later, the Sadler's Wells Ballet was back at Covent Garden and several of the company's ballerinas, no doubt still recovering from the annual holiday, were dancing very far below their usual high standard. The result—cheers and stampings of approval.

And still we have a reputation for generosity and fairmindedness!

Dames to honour Bedells

THE three Dames of ballet—Ninette de Valois, Adeline Genée and Margot Fonteyn—are on the committee organising a dinner to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Phyllis Bedells' first stage appearance. Also on it are Anton Dolin, P. J. S. Richardson and Peter Williams.

The dinner will be at Claridge's on December 16 and will have Lady Hicks (formerly the famous actress, Ellaline Terriss), as president, with Dame Margot Fonteyn as vice-chairman. Dame Adeline Genée will propose the toast, seconded by Anton Dolin. It is hoped that as many of those connected with British ballet as is possible will be there, for Phyllis Bedells holds a unique place in the history of ballet in this country.

Tickets can be had from Mr. P. J. S. Richardson at 12 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.2.

happy birthday to...

		O. V.
Brian Ashbridge	Sadler's Wells Ballet	25
Jocelyn Vollmar		25
Peter Wright	Sadler's Wells Opera Ballet	25
Nicholas Magallanes	New York City Ballet	27
Shaun O'Brien	New York City Ballet	28
Philippe Perrottet	Dancing in films	29
		Dec.
Alicia Markova	Guest ballerina	1
Philip Chatfield	Sadler's Wells Ballet	2
Harold Turner	Sadler's Wells Organisation	2
Moyra Fraser	Dancing in revue	3
Lupe Serrano	Ballet Theatre	7
Grant Strate	Canadian National Ballet	7
Estella Nova	Festival Ballet	9
Miro Zolan	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	10
Kenneth Macmillan	Sadler's Wells Choreographer	11
Helga Monson	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	13
Shirley Cash	Canadian National Ballet	13
Nathalie Philippart	Dancing in Paris	15
Annette Page	Sadler's Wells Ballet	18
Jaime de Leon	Ballet Theatre	19

Dancer of To-day

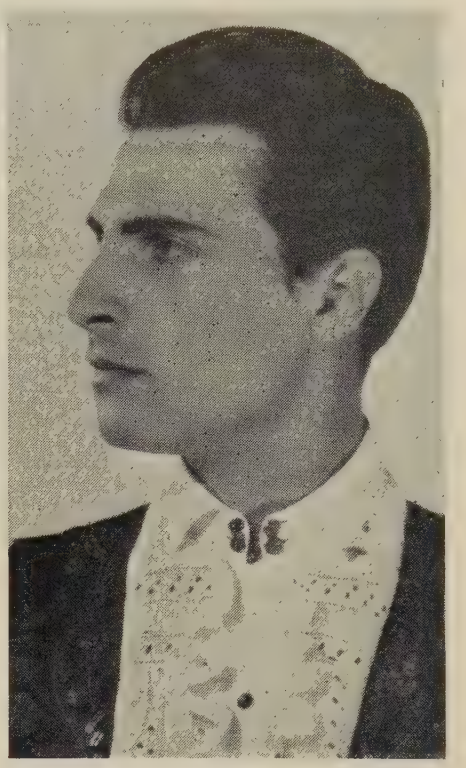

Photo: Geynes

PACO RUIZ

BORN in Seville. Started to dance at the age of 18 when he was a radio telephonist in the Navy. Teachers were Enrique Ximenez, known as "El Cojo," in Seville and Antonio. Made his stage début at the Theatre Fontalba, Seville. Now on his third vist to Great Britain.

Principal Roles: the Spectre in El Amor Brujo. *Solos:* Sacromonte; Farruca El Polo.

THERE may be more unrewarding positions in the theatre world than to be second male dancer to Antonio, but if there are, they hardly spring to mind. The position of Paco Ruiz is hardly made better by the fact that he is Antonio's cousin—although such a situation is not uncommon in Spanish ballet, which quite often is a family business.

However, by his marked improvement season by season over the past three years, Ruiz has lived down all his initial disadvantages. Fairly tall for a male dancer, Ruiz is physically almost the exact counterpart of his famous cousin. They nevertheless share something of the same magnetic audience appeal, and Ruiz is learning a lot of Antonio's stagecraft and showmanship.

Like the rest of Antonio's company, his technical command is growing rapidly. His footwork, once rough and almost clumsy, has this season a new fluency. His bearing has the hard arrogance of the true Spanish dancer, and his personality, once so mouselike, now stands out of the *corps de ballet*. If, as seems likely, Antonio's ultimate ambition is to produce a company in which he himself is only a part of the whole, the progress of dancers like Paco Ruiz will be of the greatest importance to its fulfilment.

Ballets by Russians

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

Stravinsky: *The Rite of Spring. The Firebird* —Suite. New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra (Eugene Ormandy). Philips NBL5032. 12in. 33*s*. 11½*d*. *The Rite of Spring*. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (Antal Dorati). Mercury MRL2006. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*. *The Rite of Spring*. R.I.A.S. Orchestra, Berlin (Ferenc Fricsay). Deutsche Grammophon DGM-18189. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*.

FOR what he does to two of Stravinsky's greatest scores, Ormandy deserves to be made to dance the whole of *The Rite of Spring* as a solo, and at the ridiculously fast speeds at which he conducts it—presumably to get the work on to one record side. The recording is raucous and congested.

The Mercury *Rite*, a re-issue of an earlier release but with a different sleeve design, is infinitely preferable. The sound here is incredibly clear and brilliant, though the string tone is a little hard. No such criticism can be made of the recent Deutsche Grammophon version, which, if not quite achieving the same degree of clarity, has a greater warmth, spaciousness and general fidelity of sound that more than compensates.

Fricsay's interpretation on the Deutsche Grammophon, though magnificently played by the German orchestra, might, however, be thought a little too restrained, stressing as it does the more lyrical aspect of the score. Dorati, on the other hand, gives a more excitingly forceful reading that comes much nearer to Stravinsky's own in his Columbia performance. The Columbia, not surprisingly, is the most compellingly directed of all recorded versions; but it has been rather indifferently engineered, and this complicates matters considerably, at least for those who have first-rate reproducing equipment.

Taking everything into account, I would say that unless you can afford to have two recordings—the Deutsche Grammophon as well as the Columbia—the Mercury is probably the best buy.

Stravinsky's experiment

Stravinsky: *The Soldier's Tale*. Robert Helpmann (*Devil*), Terence Longdon (*Soldier*), Anthony Nicholls (*Narrator*), Chamber Ensemble (John Pritchard). HMV ALP1377. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*.

THE Soldier's Tale, an entertainment "to be read, played and danced," was devised for the small travelling troupe Stravinsky set up, together with some friends, during the time he was stranded in Switzerland with small financial resources at the end of the first world war.

The little story of the down-at-heel Soldier who falls into the hands of the Devil is treated in an almost grimly realistic manner—a reflection no doubt of the mood of the times, and of the tense conditions under which the work was written. The music, brilliantly scored for seven instruments, provides a colourfully brittle accompaniment to the action, while remaining coolly detached, Stravinsky by this time having declared himself an "anti-Romantic."

Diaghilev once said that "of all the Slav composers Stravinsky is the only one devoid of Slav charm;" and in *The Soldier's Tale* this absence of any endearing warmth of feeling counts, in performance, as a serious deficiency, possibly to a greater extent than in any other of Stravinsky's stage works.

But if unsatisfying in the theatre, it makes diverting gramophone listening and it is hard to imagine a more enjoyable performance than this one, a studio re-creation of the Glyndebourne Opera production given at the 1954 Edinburgh Festival. This was notable for the excellent new idiomatic English translation of Ramuz's libretto by Michael Flanders and Kitty Black and also for bringing together two former stars of the Sadler's Wells Ballet —Robert Helpmann and Moira Shearer— in the speaking and dancing part of the Devil and the danced role of the Princess respectively.

THE SOLDIER'S TALE: *Moira Shearer as the Princess, Terence Longdon as the Soldier and Robert Helpmann as the Devil in the* 1954 *Edinburgh Festival production of Stravinsky's Russian folktale entertainment.*
Photo: Scottish Tourist Board

Although at the end, when the Princess calls out vainly to her doomed Soldier, it is not Shearer's voice we hear but that of an unnamed actress, Helpmann makes an important contribution, his impersonation, in sound, of an old-clothes' woman—one of the Devil's disguises—being, in particular, as wonderfully convincing as was his miming of Carabosse at an earlier stage of his career.

The parts of the Narrator and the Soldier are also expertly acted and the instrumentalists give a lively account of Stravinsky's music. The recording reproduces it all vividly.

Music for Fokine

Rachmaninov: *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano), Philharmonia Orchestra (Hugo Rignold). Chopin: Barcarolle, Op. 60. Nocturne No. 18 in E, Op. 62, No. 2. Ballade No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 52. Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano). HMV CLP1072. 12in. 33*s*. 11½*d*.

AS might have been expected from a pianist who is generally regarded as today's foremost exponent of Rachmaninov's piano works, Moiseiwitsch gives a masterly account of the popular *Rhapsody*—the music used by Fokine, at the composer's own suggestion, for his *Paganini*. Rachmaninov also wrote a new, more theatrically effective ending for the ballet, based on the famous tune of the eighteenth variation, as well as collaborating with the choreographer on the scenario.

Perhaps in one or two places—the double octaves in the twenty-second variation, for instance—Moiseiwitsch does not quite equal the effortless brilliance of his older 78 recording. But this hardly bears mentioning, for his playing is even more eloquently inflected than before, the interpretation having a mellowness and commanding breadth that makes the more athletic Decca performance of Julius Katchen sound more than a little cold and mechanical. Rignold secures disciplined orchestral support and the recording is of excellent quality.

The Chopin pieces on the reverse are played with nobility and rare poetic insight.

Colourful Borodin

Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B Minor. Symphony No. 3 in A Minor, *Unfinished*. Philharmonia Orchestra (Nicolai Malko). HMV CLP1075. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*.

THE two symphonies on this record formed part of the Borodin score for Massine's Russian folktale ballet *Bogatyri*, first given at the New York Metropolitan in 1938, with Gontcharova décor.

Borodin's *Unfinished*, like Schubert's, consists of only two movements and even these were put together from sketches and orchestrated by Glazunov after his death. Though much less ambitious in scope than either of its predecessors, it is a colourful and engaging work and here makes the perfect foil to the more virile splendours of the Second Symphony. Both works receive outstanding performances under Malko and vivid, sumptuous recording to match.

Vivaldi's Seasons

Vivaldi: *Le Quattro Stagioni* (*The Four Seasons*). Manoug Parikian (violin), Philharmonia String Orchestra (Carlo Maria Giulini). Columbia 33CX1365. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*. Tino Bacchetta (violin), Ensemble Instrumental Sinfonia (Jean Witold). London International TWV91157. 12in. 39*s*. 7½*d*. Felix Ayo (violin), I Musici. Philips ABL3128. 12in. 38*s*. 3*d*.

IF, as it has been claimed, LP records have been mainly responsible for the Vivaldi revival of recent years, it was the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra's 1951 Decca recording —LXT2600—of his enchanting violin concertos, *The Four Seasons*, that made the red-headed Venetian priest-composer's name a household word.

Counting these new ones, there are now six recordings of *The Four Seasons* from which to choose, all enjoyable, but none of the five later performances quite achieving the wonderful spontaneity and sensitivity of the original Decca. Perhaps the finely polished playing on the Columbia comes closest to rivalling that of the Stuttgart team, but by comparison the interpretation sounds a little too studied, while the recording, though beautifully smooth and rich, lacks something of the delicacy and perfect clarity of the Decca, from which, in recent pressings, some earlier background hum has now been eliminated.

The Philips, too, is an admirably neat performance, with some of the best solo playing of all, and splendidly engineered. But again, when compared with the Stuttgart version, the playing is shown to be slightly unimaginative in perception.

The London disc offers a more forthrightly dramatic account of the music, brightly reproduced, which might be recommended to those wanting a souvenir of Ballet Rambert's production of Joffrey's *Persephone*, danced to the *Spring* and *Winter* concertos. But the subtler delights of the music are, without any doubt I would say, far more captivatingly conveyed by the Decca.

So You Want to Dance?

Schools and Teachers
by E. C. MASON

The influence of Pavlova

ALTHOUGH few members of the Pavlova company achieved success as dancers after the company dissolved in 1931, many have achieved remarkable success as teachers. An article on Cloe Nordi, former member of Pavlova's company now teaching, appeared in the September DANCE AND DANCERS. This series on teachers would be incomplete, however, without an assessment of the work of another former Pavlova dancer, Kathleen Crofton.

Pavlova chose her dancers with great care, then sought to arouse the artist in each one. Insufficient response to her reputedly rather drastic methods of doing this would sometimes produce hours of rehearsal—painful perhaps, but always valuable. She would not cease until the result came as near perfection as she considered possible. Those unsuited to living and working in such an atmosphere soon left, and it says much for Pavlova's judgment in choosing her dancers that these were so few.

Her influence is widespread even today. Studying the careers of those of her dancers who are now teaching, and their methods of tuition, proves this, and may also impart to the reader something of the secret of that influence which enabled Pavlova to leave the world of dance better than she found it.

Kathleen Crofton's tours

ONE former Pavlova dancer teaching in London today is Kathleen Crofton. This is all the more surprising for two reasons: firstly, throughout her career she danced very little in this country, her only London appearances being with Pavlova at Covent Garden and, years afterwards, two short season with the Markova-Dolin company at the Duke of York's and at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith. Secondly, until she opened her studio in 1951, she had had no contact with the world of dance since before the war. And although a dance journal is hardly the place in which to quote such a remark, I was once told that one of the main reasons why she has had such a success as a teacher was because she had the advantage of gaining valuable experience in a saner outside world before reaching Great Newport Street.

She began her studies with Laurent Novikoff, and it was through him that she received an audition for the Pavlova company, for which she was accepted immediately on leaving ballet school. During her four and a half years with the company she worked her way up to a position of soloist, being one of the six honoured dancers whose individual photographs were included in the programme during Pavlova's last season at Covent Garden.

She toured America twice, Mexico, Canada, South Africa, Australasia, and nearly every country in Europe except Russia, to which Pavlova was never able to return after the Revolution, until a breakdown in health forced her to leave this company.

The opening of the new Opera House brought her to Chicago, followed by coast-to-coast American tours for two years, and it was here, under her old teacher, Novikoff, that she had her first experience of teaching when she occasionally deputised for him. Later she resumed work in London, studying under Nicholas Legat, who, incidentally, also seemes to think she had the makings of a teacher, for at that time he considered opening another studio in St. John's Wood and placing her in charge. Prospectuses were printed, but the project did not materialise. Eventually she went to Paris, where she studied intensively with Preobrajenska and, for a short time, with Trefilova.

YOUNGEST PUPIL: Kathleen Crofton with Paula Kahn, the youngest student in the school. Since Kathleen Crofton opened her school five years ago, guest-teachers who have taught there have included former Diaghilev ballerinas Tamara Karsavina and Lydia Sokolova.

Photo: Adrian Flowers

In 1932 she joined the company Nijinska had formed in Paris, the *Théâtre de Danse*. Seasons were given at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées and at the Châtelet, and the entire repertoire was comprised of Nijinska ballets, including *Les Noces* and *Les Biches*, as well as some of her interesting post-Diaghilev works.

She also danced with Nijinska and de Basil's Ballet Russe at Monte Carlo, and then joined, as soloist, Dandré's Ballet Russe which was led by Spessivtzeva and Vilzak, visiting Java, Australia, Ceylon, India and Egypt. In 1935 she joined the newly-formed Markova-Dolin company and remained with it for almost two years. This was the last time she danced in the theatre. She went again to Paris for further study with Preobrajenska, only to return to London at the outbreak of war. War work then occupied her time completely, and it was not until 1951 that she returned to ballet.

A practical idealist

When a teacher has worked with Pavlova, Novikoff, Preobrajenska, Nicholas Legat, Trefilova, Spessivtzeva, Nijinska, Markova and Dolin, there is no need to ask what style she favours. Now she is particularly anxious to try to pass on the beautiful flowing movement as she remembers it in the great exponents of the Russian school—movement which seems to extend far beyond the extremities of the dancer's physical form and flow continuously into space. Kathleen Crofton is so anxious to preserve in her own mind as clearly as possible all that she has learned from these great artists that she has refused to clutter up her mind learning syllabuses and coaching students for examinations.

Artists from the leading visiting companies frequently go to her for tuition, and a dozen different nationalities may be found among those attending her classes. Some of her former pupils are now with the de Cuevas and Festival Ballet companies, as well as in the Sadler's Wells School.

Kathleen Crofton is unusual as a teacher. It is not merely that she is that rarity in the world of ballet—a practical idealist—but she is passionately interested in dancers at every stage of their development, and is particularly concerned that beginners should be taught correctly from the outset.

She is also ruthlessly honest, and will do her best to discourage students from attempting to dance if she believes that, while they may be good enough for pantomime, they will never reach ballet standards. But she will always qualify such advice by stressing that this is only her opinion. Neither is she a possessive teacher, given to making scenes if she discovers that one of her pupils is having classes elsewhere.

Unusual advice

In fact, she has been known to advise certain students to transfer to a different teacher whom she feels would be more suitable. "An artist's vision," she says, "must not be circumscribed by one set of opinions. The advanced student must be encouraged to think for himself and be free to go wherever he finds the greatest help for his work."

Children and elementary students are exceptions, however, and these, she believes, should have only one teacher at a time. This rule is strictly maintained in her school.

Her studio is on the third floor of 10 Great Newport Street, and pupils of every standard are accepted. In teaching beginners and elementary students she is assisted by Monica Boam, a former member of Antony Tudor's London Ballet, Ballet Rambert at the Arts Theatre, and Continental Ballet. In this way far more personal tuition can be given to the weaker students without holding up the work of the whole class.

Her classes, though not fussy, are the product of a highly intelligent original mind, and she has a deep understanding of music. She is a genius at handling students, possessing a knack of meeting every one of them, regardless of ability, on a common human level. Watching her give a class is a remarkable experience—each student is treated differently, according to age, standard and temperament.

"Though a strong technique is absolutely essential," she says, "it must never be forgotten that this is merely a means to an end. When a student glimpses something of that ephemeral quality which transforms movement into dance—and this can happen even at the first *plié*—the fascinating process for both student

continued on page 30

DANCING IN ACTION

Through 3-D Glasses

By SONIA STILLER. A book on ballet dancing which has proved extremely popular in the U.S.A. In it the author presents, in a highly original way, many exercises and devices which she has developed during many years of teaching ballet. Two hundred and fifty dance illustrations explain the text and twelve movements are illustrated by 3-D line drawings which, viewed through the spectacles provided with each book, give the illusion of movement. In addition, five 3-D photographs illustrate special positions, and a glossary of ballet terms is included. A really valuable book for students of the ballet. 10/6 net.

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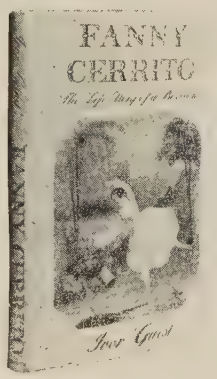

The Life of a Romantic Ballerina by

Ivor Guest

Author of THE ROMANTIC BALLET IN ENGLAND

The well-known ballet historian now gives us the first life of the greatest star of the Romantic Ballet. In a career spanning a quarter of a century she became the darling of the theatre-going publics of Europe's capitals, London being the most expansive in its adoration. Set against the social background of the day, with much new material from family sources, and many portraits previously unpublished, this book casts a new light on a famous dancer, her strange life and times.

Royal 8vo. *24pp. plates, 4-colour frontispiece*

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The Bolshoi Ballet on home ground

NEW BOOKS

Ballet in Moscow Today, by Helene Bellew. (Thames & Hudson, 35*s.*)

AT the moment when the Bolshoi Ballet from Moscow are appearing for the first time in Western Europe, the publication of a book of this kind is most timely. In actual fact it would be timely at any moment. Hélène Bellew is the married name of that fine dancer Hélène Kirsova, who was one of the ballerinas of the de Basil company. This spring she visited Moscow to get the material for a book and I can think of nobody more suitable to undertake the job. Her assessment of the school, company and ballets is completely unbiased and full of welcome sanity. She does not hesitate to point out what she considers to be faults according to her upbringing and her obvious enthusiasm for other factors is never tinged with the rabid hysteria which so often mars the accounts of visits to the Soviet Union. She has done a great service to us and, incidentally, to the Bolshoi Ballet, by her objective narrative.

There are descriptions of the performance of the company's most prominent dancers and of 15 of their most famous ballets—both classical and contemporary—together with 160 action photographs. Some of the latter are particularly beautiful and, on occasions, their lack of gloss is an advantage as a greater quality is achieved.

In addition to all this, it is a beautifully produced volume. The fact that it was printed in a very few weeks, by Pizzi of Milan, should give some people in this country food for thought. I have no hesitation in recommending everyone interested to get this handsome book, not only as a souvenir of a historical season but also as a record of a very great ballet company.

ORIENTAL MERRY-GO-ROUND

Theatre in the East, by Faubion Bowers. (Thomas Nelson, 42*s.*)

DANCE and drama in the Asian theatre are so interwoven that it is almost impossible to think of one without the other. In the West it is only in our stage and film musicals that such an inseparable union takes place, and even then there are no hard and fast rules. For nearly 15 years Faubion Bowers has traipsed across the Far East from western India to eastern Japan and he has made an exhaustive study of all forms of theatre in the countries between these points. Unlike Beryl de Zoete's *The Other Mind*, which deals solely with the dance of South India, this is not a book to read for the sheer pleasure of reading —it is packed full of information much as is a superior guide book. A more personal approach would certainly be to the advantage of the average reader, for to try and digest this volume in one reading would leave most people in a daze at the end, with all the different types of demons, dragons, witches, princesses and heroes milling around in the brain like some immense and confused heroic tapestry.

But if the different sections are studied separately, then this is a most invaluable book, most worthwhile perhaps for those countries such as Ceylon, Cambodia, the Philippines or Okinawa, about which very little data is available in Western literature. This does not mean to say that the chapters on India, Bali, China and Japan are any less good. From this book anybody should be able to get a fairly clear idea of the historical background and the present situation of the theatre in those countries washed by the Indian and Pacific Oceans and the China Seas.

The volume is as well produced and illustrated as was Faubion Bowers's previous book, *Japanese Theatre*.

SOUVENIR HUNGARICA

Hungarian Rhapsody, compiled by Rezsó Varjasi and Vince Horváth (From Collet's Bookshop, 35*s.*)

IT is a great pity that this charming book was not available in London when the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble gave a season at the Palace Theatre in the early summer. There is a description of the company's formation and chapters about its music, together with examples of most of the music used. There is a large section of excellent photographs of the different dances and colour plates of the costume designs. Altogether an exceedingly well produced book which should still be of interest to those who have libraries of national dances, though it should be remembered that much of this certainly authentic material has been slightly theatricalised for stage presentation.

MUMMY'S FAULT AS USUAL

Dancers of Tomorrow, by Naomi Capon. The story of a girl's training at the Sadler's Wells School. (Brockhampton Press, 12*s.* 6*d.*)

MRS. BLAKE was obviously a frustrated dancer and she needed little persuasion on the part of her daughter, Ann, to allow her to audition for the Sadler's Wells School. Mr. Blake was not sold on the idea so easily but, after being confronted by Ursula Moreton, he too weakened. So, with encouragement from Mummy, Ann Blake goes through the Colet Gardens school, meeting Dame Ninette, Uncle Arnold, Uncle Harold, Miss Edwards and all. Eventually the day comes when Ann dances in the *corps de ballet* in *Coppélia* at Covent

Garden. After it was all over, Mummy declared: "It was beautiful, darling. The whole ballet was beautiful, and your dance was the prettiest." Daddy, apparently, thought it was pretty also.

This is, I suppose, a good way of showing children and parents the workings of the school attached to our national companies, but I wish that it did not read like *What Katie Did*. The theatre is a professional rough-and-tumble and to keep out of the High School approach, any books on the inner workings of the subject should be thoroughly adult and completely divorced from Mummies and Daddies. One also wonders what is really taught there when a caption to a picture in this volume informs us that *Coppélia* is the oldest ballet still danced in England. Apparently *Giselle* and *Napoli* do not exist.

BASIC STEPS IN 3-D

Dancing in Action, by Sonia Stiller. (Pitman, 10*s*. 6*d*.)

THE idea of this book is most original and its value lies more in its possibilities than in its achievement. With the aid of red and blue glasses and perpetual winking with each eye, it is possible to get an idea of direction and of what is meant by *grand battement*, *développé*, *temps levé*, etc. The trouble is that the book tries to do too much and valuable space is wasted on rather pointless pictures of "The Swan Dance," "Two Young Dancers" and "A Toe Pose," all in 3-D, which are neither attractive nor particularly informative. Drawings of *barre* and centre work and of how to dance a Tambourine Dance, a Fan Dance and a Doll Dance, and a phonetic glossary of terms complete this paper-covered book designed, presumably, for the would-be student. I still think that if better drawings, such as those in Cecchetti Society books, were subjected to this 3-D treatment, the problem of how to demonstrate movement in book form might be solved.

THE PICTURES HAVE IT!

Ballet 6, by Serge Lido. (Société Française de Livre, 57 Rue de L' Université, Paris.)

SINCE the time when people first began to write about the dance, many million webs of words have been woven around a dancer's performance in an attempt to perpetuate the living dance in print. Some of this descriptive prose had been successful—Gautier on Romantic ballet, Beaumont of some Diaghilev dancers and, more recently, Buckle of a few post-war artists. But in the end it is the visual record that really gives us the best idea of what they were like. Without Chalon lithographs, it is doubtful if Gautier's words would carry such weight and nothing that has been written about Pavlova gives us the feeling of her grandeur like a photograph. I recall, in particular, the photograph of her in *Le Pavillion d'Armide*.

For the past six years Serge Lido has brought out his photographic ballet annual and these have varied in quality according to what the year had to offer. Dull years bring dull pictures, but this year has been a good one. Dancers from Russia, England, France, Denmark, Sweden, Spain and Italy, Negro and Japanese dancers also, leap, grin, frown and posture through this sixth volume's hundred or so pages. Sometimes they are in performance, sometimes in alien surroundings, though by now the novelty has rather worn off the spectacle of a ballerina in point shoes posed on the edge of a lake. A welcome innovation in this annual is the section of eminent choreographers at work—Balanchine hopping, Ashton arranging Fonteyn's fingers, Taras looking calm, Lander triumphant and Massine statuesque, Nijinska having hysterics. In these photographs, Lido has caught the essence of various creators' approach to their art.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES — ILLUSTRATED

Danseurs de Notre Temps, a series of booklets on Marjorie Tallchief, George Skibine, Serge Golovine, Alicia Markova, Yvette Chauviré and Roland Petit. (Robert Laffont, Paris, 275 *francs* each.)

SOME years ago Cyril Beaumont brought out a series of illustrated biographies of various dancers of today and yesterday. They told us more or less all we needed to know about the dancers in question. This French series of contemporary dancer biographies by Michel Glotz, Claude Baignères and Irène Lidova concerns more contemporary dancers. If you can read French you will welcome them; if you can't, then there are many good pictures of the respective artist, ranging from childhood to stardom.

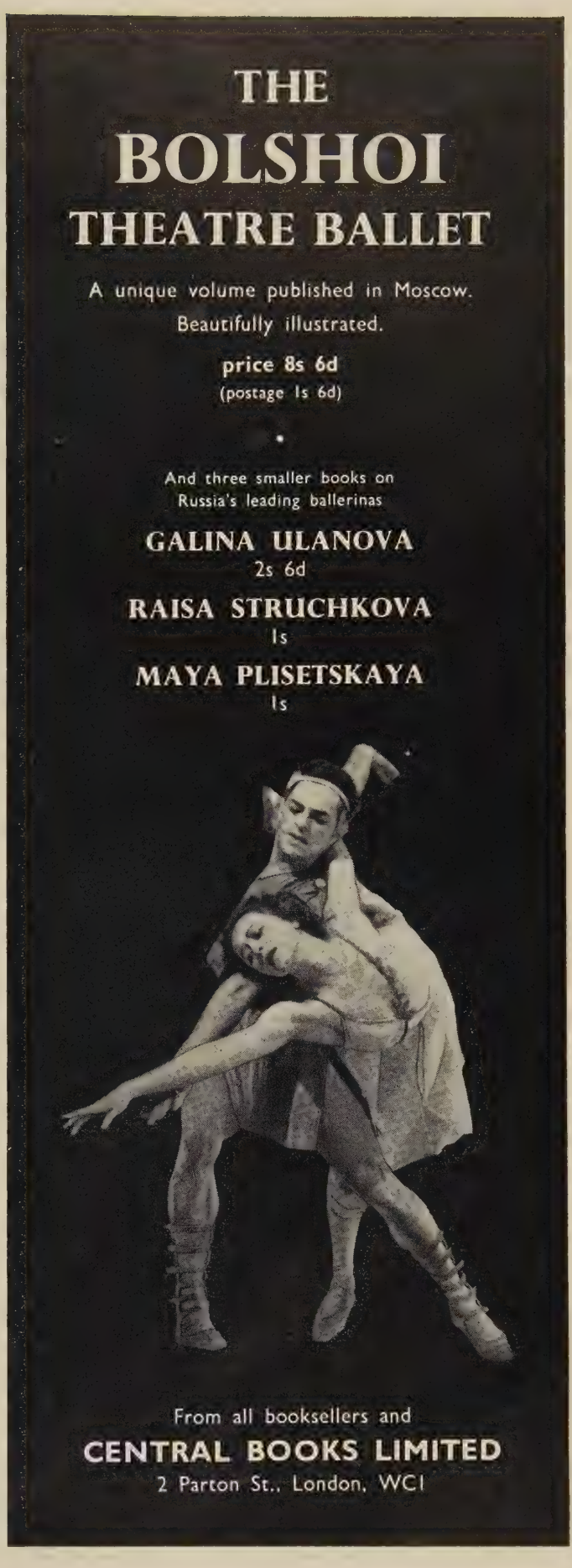
Peter Williams

TRIBUTE TO A GREAT SPANISH DANCER

Argentina. With Photographs by Monique Paravicini. With the Artistic Collaboration of Gilberte Cournand and Iliazd. (Obtainable from Librairie La Danse, 20 Place Dauphine, Paris 1*er*, 2,600 *francs*.)

IT is 20 years since the great Spanish dancer Argentina died, and Paris has honoured her memory by an exhibition at the Opéra and by the publication, in a limited edition, of 500 copies, of this finely produced book of action photographs accompanied by quotations from the writings of Levinson and other French critics. This is a delicate tribute to an artist to whom a great debt is owed, a tribute which not only will stir the memories of those who saw and admired her, but should touch also those for whom she is only a famous name in the history of the dance.

Marie-Françoise Christout



NINA TRANSFORMED: Michael Boulton, as Salvador, in a pas de deux *with Sara Neil as Nina turned into a bird.*

BIRD WOMAN TRIUMPHANT: Margaret Hill borne aloft by the boys, as enchanted birds, in the TV production of MacMillan's House of Birds.
Photos: BBC

McMillan in a new medium

THE HOUSE OF BIRDS

Given on BBC Television on September 16. Choreography, Kenneth MacMillan. Décor and costumes, Nicholas Georgiadis. Music by Federico Mompou, orchestrated by John Lanchbery. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by John Lanchbery. Producer, Margaret Dale.

CAST

Nina .. .. SARA NEIL
Salvador .. MICHAEL BOULTON
The Bird Woman .. MARGARET HILL
The Enchanted Girls: PAULINE BARNES, SHIRLEY BISHOP, BRENDA BOULTON, DORINDA BROWN, YVONNE ENGLISH, YVONNE LAKIER.
The Enchanted Boys: GORDON AITKEN, ROY CARLTON, DAVID HARDING, BRYAN LAWRENCE, DONALD MACLEARY, LESLIE WHITE.

MOST past ballet productions have proved that atmosphere, which on stage is so vitally important to a ballet, is rather difficult to capture in the television studio. The special requirements which must be called into play when a ballet is adapted for television (or when television sometimes adapts itself to a ballet) often conspire to wreck a work from the point of view of atmosphere.

The House of Birds lent itself very well to television treatment, and there was certainly no lack of atmosphere on this occasion. Its peculiar mood of mystery was immediately established by interesting lighting and well sustained in an almost flawless production by Margaret Dale.

With the absence of stage colours in televised ballet one becomes far more conscious of the music, particularly so when it is as well played as this was by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. On television one noted to a greater extent how MacMillan has made maximum use of the changes of mood in these carefully arranged pieces. The conventional "concert-waltz" ending, however, appears even more jarring on television than it did on the stage.

Margaret Dale used a great variety of shots; some were intended to do no more than vary the picture, while the majority were intelligently used to stress aspects of the choreography. The aerial shots of star patterns at the opening were rather reminiscent of the Aqua Ballet, but this was an effect which was used once only. Although the dancers were given ample room the screen at times seemed to be more cluttered-up than it actually was. The décor of Georgiadis, even though adapted to the smaller space, rather accentuated this, and lost a great deal from being seen in black and white.

TELEVISION
Reviewed by E. C. MASON

The two lovers were beautifully danced by Sara Neil and Michael Boulton; they seemed admirably unaware of the staring cameras. So unselfconscious did they appear, that when the cameras closed in for essential close-ups we got the impression that we were watching their emotions very privately through a keyhole.

Margaret Hill as the Bird Woman gave an exceptionally good performance, alert, cruel and strangely sinister. MacMillan has obviously paid a great deal of attention to the awkward movements of birds on the ground. Some of the finer details of his choreography as interpreted by Margaret Hill would surely delight James Fisher and his fellow ornithologists. The *corps de ballet* danced well, the Enchanted Girls were, if anything, rather more precise than the Enchanted Boys.

Margaret Dale, who has done so much excellent work for television ballet, will be able to improve her production technique even more if she achieves a little more rhythm in cutting from scene to scene according to the dictates of the music, so that the musical phrases are treated with the coherence with which they have been interpreted by the choreographer. However, her cameras always seem to be plotted with such artistry that she must find it very hard to reject new shots, which look so effective scenically that they would seem to be too good to miss.

MARKOVA AT TEN

Given on BBC Television on September 30. Pianist, Jack Byfield. Producer, Christian Simpson.

AT one time *Music at Ten* was one of the week's top programmes. This latest series featuring Max Jaffa's musicians has been miserably tasteless and only redeemed by Markova's appearances as guest artist. In this particular programme she danced the Prelude from *Les Sylphides* and gave, from what we could see, a wonderfully sensitive performance.

The producer's idea of arranging the cameras so that they would float slowly forward to the French windows to capture her dancing in a garden was imaginative. It proved to be a dangerous undertaking: the cameras stopped moving at the wrong moments and Markova appeared to suffer amputation, subsiding under the window during one of the *assemblés* and disappearing completely behind some foliage for one of her preparations.

So you want to Dance

by E. C. Mason

continued from page 27

and teacher beings—the bringing of the artist into focus."

She has always attempted to broaden the artistic range of her pupils. One of her methods of doing this has been to engage distinguished guest-teachers. For two years the famous Diaghilev dancer Lydia Sokolova gave character dance classes. She is also most appreciative of having had the valuable opportunity of watching Karsavina give a weekly class in her studio for almost 18 months, and was sad when these came to an end in the spring of 1955. The school has also been very fortunate in having the patronage of Markova and Dolin at its inauguration, and their support ever since.

Special classes may now be arranged with the specialist teachers who are working in conjunction with Kathleen Crofton. Michel de Lutry is conducting *pas de deux* classes, Maria Zybina is taking character classes, and Lalagia, who has just returned from Madrid, is teaching Spanish dance.

Classes are held at 11.15 a.m., including Saturday; and at 4 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. (elementary) from Monday to Friday. On Wednesdays and Fridays there are classes for small children at 3 p.m. and on Saturdays there is an elementary class at 10 a.m. and a class for absolute beginners at 1.15 p.m.

The conclusion of Clive Barnes' review of Ballet Theatre's season in London which started in the October issue.

BALLET THEATRE

De Mille on stage

Agnes de Mille's veteran *Rodeo* was given added interest from the performance of the choreographer herself in the part of the Cow-Girl, which she originally danced when the work was created for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1942. Her present performance was gallant and in terms of sheer physical stamina would have been a credit to a woman many years her junior. It is always interesting to see a choreographer's interpretation in his or her own ballet, even if, as in this instance, we were not able completely to suspend our belief that time had passed.

At two performances the same part was taken by Annabelle Gold, who interpreted its gaucheries with spirit and good humour. The outstanding performance of the ballet, which by the way also showed the strength of the male *corps*, came from Kriza as the Champion Roper. Kriza is a most unusual type of dancer, a character dancer with the physique of a *premier danseur*. His warm personality, stage magnetism and formidable, if rough, technique, make up an irresistible combination, and all this season he has been the sheet-anchor of the company. His characterisations are not unduly subtle, but they are complete and thoroughgoing. He buries himself into his parts, and his lovable Champion Roper was "Americana" style dancing at its very best.

Apart from the new Tudor the only other novelty of the season was *A Street Car Named Desire*.

PLAY AS BALLET: Nora Kaye, as Blanche, and John Kriza, as her brother-in-law Stanley, in a tense moment from A Street Car Named Desire, *the ballet version of Tennessee Williams' play given by Ballet Theatre. Valerie Bettis first created the work for the Slavenska-Franklin Ballet in* 1952. *Photo: Lido*

A STREET CAR NAMED DESIRE

First given in London by Ballet Theatre at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on August 30, 1956. Choreography, Valerie Bettis. Music, Alex North, adapted and orchestrated by Rayburn Wright. Costumes, Saul Bolasni.

CAST

Blanche	NORA KAYE
Stanley	JOHN KRIZA
Mitch	SCOTT DOUGLAS
Stella	CHRISTINE MAYER
The Man from Upstairs	GEORGE TOMAL
The Woman from Upstairs	JOAN EAMAN

IF you have not seen the play or film (you know, the one with that nice Mr. Brando), I suppose you can read the programme, and on the whole the management were mistaken in not providing torches for this purpose. On reading the programme you may think that any choreographer who commits himself to a scenario involving such niceties as "Unable to understand the loss of his wife's inheritance, Stanley rifles Blanche's suitcase and stumbles upon love letters from her dead husband," does not understand too much of what ballet is about, and I think you may be right.

Ballet Theatre's policy has always, and not altogether unwisely, tended towards revivals rather than creations; indeed of the sixteen items in the present London repertory only three were originally created for the company. *A Street Car Named Desire* is yet another revival, and was first produced by Valerie Bettis for the Slavenska-Franklin Ballet in 1952, when the principal roles were given by Slavenska and Franklin themselves.

The story, loosely, is of a faded and unfortunate Southern belle's struggles against sexual desires which threaten and finally succeed to send her across the border-line of sanity. The ballet seeks to expand the brutal narrative of the play by the introduction of Blanche's dream world, and expound the theme in terms of De Mille's dream psychology. The results are involved and stupid, and, what is almost worse, a pitiable waste of Kaye's great talents. To see her tip-toeing across the stage like a cat on a hot tin roof, assailed by the half-imagined figures of desire, is to be made acutely aware of the depths of neurotic repression she is capable of expressing. To see her entry at the end, dressed in the old clothes of Blanche's former grandeur, is to see what 20th century ballet has gained 20th century drama has lost. When we talk of superb ballet actors and actresses we normally mean superb in ballet; Kaye, I think, would be superb in any theatrical medium to which she turned.

Bettis has taken an impossible theme and worked on it uninterestingly. Intended to be stark, real and daring, like most works of art that set out with such laudably sensationalist intentions it succeeds only in being funny. The climactic rape scene (coyly called "attack" in the programme) with Stanley in short pants and gold pyjamas is definitely not for the sophisticated.

The music would give swell support to a "B" feature movie. The décor, anonymous, consists of doors.

Apart from Kaye, the other dancers also work magnificently. Kriza as the inarticulate bull of a Stanley, Mayer (and at a later performance Koesun) as the youthful and eager Stella, and Douglas as the nice, stolid gentleman-caller, all give the ballet everything they have got.

At the ballet's final performance in London, the bathing-suited "figures of desire" previously lurking in the background during one episode were omitted. This seemed to be a first step in the right direction.

The programme seeing the *Street Car* set out on its first London trip, ended with a performance of Balanchine's *Theme and Variations*, with Hightower and Bruhn in the leading parts created by, and for, Alonso and Youskevitch. Ballet Theatre often seems to use a few of its stars as though they were guest artists, which is one of the reasons why the company posesses no readily recognisible style of its own, and this classical ballet to Tchaikovsky's *Third Suite for Orchestra*, was the only ordinary repertory work in which Hightower and Bruhn appeared.

Hightower, possibly through her recent change of company, appears to be going through a difficult transitional period just now, and seemed unable to do herself full justice. At her best she is a marvellous and unaffected dancer, but during this fortnight she was sadly not at her best. In *Theme and Variations* her brilliant turns and startling *équilibre* showed to their good advantage. Bruhn danced well in this ballet but not with the arrogant nonchalance of Youskevitch. Scott Douglas, excellent in many things during the season, was less suited to the role than Bruhn, and too frequently had to disguise his technical inadequacy for the part with stage-craft. A *double rond de jambe en l'air* is more than a casual flick, and the big variation should end with a continuous series of *double tours en l'air* interspersed with *pirouettes*.

The triumph of Serrano

The two final performances of the season in a sense belong to the newcomer Lupe Serrano. At the matinée she gave the only performance of Dollar's Tasso horse-ballet *The Combat*. As the unfortunate Clorinda inadvertently killed by her lover in the Crusades, she was dramatically terrific, and the clean sweep of her *jetés* deserve to become the talk of the town.

That this performance was no flash in the pan was shown the same evening when in the *Don Quixote pas de deux* she once again had the audience at her feet. Curvetting round the stage like a thing possessed, twisting in her partner's hands like a well-adjusted spindle, and holding her *attitudes* like a Degas bronze, she established herself as one of the most

interesting young dancers to come out of America during the past decade. Were she securely placed in one of the big State companies she would be a first-rate ballerina prospect.

Bruhn, in this same *pas de deux*, danced with more *élan* than previously, and found his true "Copenhagen" form, which had previously eluded him. A series of the cleanest *entrechats huits* I have ever seen was the highspot of a wonderful technical display.

The programme ended on the Saturday night with a vigorous performance of *Rodeo*, and so Ballet Theatre, our first, and in many ways still our favourite, post-war Covent Garden visitors, concluded their fourth successful season in London.

Clive Barnes

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET

The Miracle of Markova

IN the early days of its existence Festival Ballet would think up any old excuse for putting on a "Gala." Nights of ballets by Massine or Fokine would be thus described. With the company's maturity and growing popularity such Galas have not been so necessary. In London, at any rate, they have been whittled down to one annual event—the company's anniversary. In the past few years these lucky-dip performances have presented us with an odd assembly of guest stars: ice-skaters, film stars and such like.

But this year's Anniversary Gala, at the Festival Hall on September 7, realised the true meaning of the word and might also have been called a home-coming, for the guest of honour was the company's original *prima ballerina*, Alicia Markova.

Before she appeared, Toni Lander and Flemming Flindt danced in the first act of the new *Coppélia*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue, which was followed by *Les Sylphides*.

To say that in this Romantic masterpiece one had eyes only for Markova is grossly unjust to the rest of the company, who worked with notable understanding of their function and of Fokine's intentions. It would also be unfair to John Gilpin, who partnered "the eternal Sylph"—Dolin's description of Markova in his curtain-speech—magnificently, lifting her as though arresting her outward flight rather than the coal-heaving act we so often see from many male dancers in this ballet. Nor should Gilpin's *Mazurka* variation be forgotten, for every moment of it was poetically realised, including his caressing of the working leg. But when all is said and done, it was Markova who remained seemingly poised above the earth on a moonbeam.

When Karsavina says, in her recent book, *Ballet Technique*, that last century's dancers were described as "alighting" rather than "landing," she may well have been thinking also of Markova, possibly the only 20th century dancer to have inherited true Romanticism. Markova alights, and the stage of Festival Hall becomes a mossy sward. In fact, I think the secret of her seeming flight is the perfect way in which she comes down—it is miraculous to behold.

But there are other aspects of Markova's performance which should be watched and treasured as a memory by all lucky enough to see her: the poise of her head, so perfectly placed upon her neck and shoulders, is so right for every movement of the rest of her body and for the mood of the dance. Never for a moment is it strained in an unnatural or unbecoming position. There is immaculate finish to everything she does, with nothing left to chance and no untidiness, no movement carelessly thrown away. The elegance of her dressing should also be studied by every other ballerina, for such attention as she gives to this often neglected side of a ballerina's stage presentation is one of the reasons why she is one of the few real stars dancing today.

Later in the programme Markova danced Fokine's *The Dying Swan*. Even this do I forgive her. Such was her artistry that she made us believe again in the wounded and dying bird drifting helplessly, like a fallen leaf down an autumn river. Though I firmly believe that Fokine created this solo for Pavlova, and for Pavlova only, if there is still an artist who can fill the stage with radiance it is Markova, and hers should be the privilege of inheriting this solo.

Between the two Markova appearances, we were regaled with the *Grand Pas d'Action* for Josette Clavier and four boys. This turned out to be the *Rose Adagio* from *The Sleeping Beauty*. In common with her fellow artists of the Paris Opéra, from which she graduated, Clavier has not inherited the grand manner for Russian classics. There was no broad sweep in her work and she walked across the stage like a swimmer emerging from the sea trying to cross a beach of shingle. There is such grandeur in Tchaikovsky's score that it would seem an impossibility for any dancer not to match it in performance; but nearly all Opéra-trained dancers manage to achieve just this impossibility. Fine dancers as they are, they shine only in classical ballets which have "neo" attached to them.

The Anniversary Gala ended with Michael Charnley's *Symphony for Fun*—not such fun as it used to be. Gilpin and Anita Lander are still as good as ever but the remainder of the cast has been changed so much that the cheeky crispness which made the work so refreshing at its outset has become flabby.

At the end, with all the artists lined up on the stage, Dolin said in his curtain-speech that the best birthday present the company could have had was the guest appearance of its original ballerina, Markova. All in the audience of 3,000 must have agreed.

P.W.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

GISELLE

First produced by the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet at the Santander Festival in Spain on August 18, 1956. First given in England at the Streatham Hill Theatre on September 4.

Produced by Nicholas Sergueeff after choreography by Coralli. Décor and Costumes, Peter Rice*, Music, Adolphe Adam.

CAST*

Giselle	SARA NEIL
Albrecht	JOHN FIELD
Berthe	VALERIE REECE
Hilarion ..	HENRY LEGERTON
The Duke of Courland	DONALD MACLEARY
Bathilde	MARGARET HILL
Wilfred	BRYAN LAWRENCE
Pas de Deux ..	DOREEN TEMPEST
	DONALD BRITTON
Myrthe	MARGARET HILL
Zulme	MARGARET LEE
Moyna	SUSAN ALEXANDER

*In Santander the performances were given in the open air without décor, and the roles of Giselle and Albrecht were taken by NADIA NERINA and ALEXIS RASSINE.

THIS production, nominally by the late Nicholas Sergueeff, follows the Covent Garden version closely and there is really nothing more that can usefully be said about its details. However this *Giselle* does, like last year's Theatre Ballet production of *Coppélia*, raise the general question of whether it is desirable for Theatre Ballet productions to follow slavishly the example given by Covent Garden.

On the face of it there is something to be said for the entire Sadler's Wells organisation having an "authorised version" of standard ballets, but the size and scope of the two companies are so different, as are the audiences and theatres catered for, that it does seem that a certain amount of variation and adaptation could be an advantage.

To Covent Garden must be entrusted the upholding of tradition, yet Sadler's Wells might well take on the responsibility of making that tradition a living force. This does not necessarily entail the changing of choreography—although some recent classical productions have shown that this is not always a bad thing—but does imply a reconsideration of the production as a whole. I wonder whether anyone has ever thought of bringing in a theatrical producer, such as Peter Brook, to produce a classic ballet using the accepted choreography as his basis.

A theatrical producer approaching *Giselle* might possibly replace the classical mime with Danish style naturalistic gesture. The second act could be full of supernatural stage tricks, and the whole production might be given a new vigour of presentation while still keeping within the bounds of classical decency.

Perhaps something like this was in the minds of the Directors when they commissioned the "new look" scenery and costumes from Peter Rice. These are a definite break with tradition. Every production of *Giselle* I can remember set the ballet in the sham medievalism of the Gothic revival. Peter Rice has turned his back on custom and placed the ballet in the period of Romanticism's heyday—the period of Werther and *Der Freischütz*.

The early 19-century costumes and the picturesque scenery (surely he should have had a waterfall in the second act to have been really in period?) are an interesting innovation. That they do not entirely come off is I think due to the markedly medieval atmosphere of the libretto.

The treatment hallowed by tradition (it may be noted that Gautier gave no specific indication of period in his scenario) has acquired its air of authenticity by its obvious appropriateness. Rice's present notion is a little shocking and a little pointless, like *Hamlet* set as a Restoration play.

The performance I saw the Theatre Ballet give was commendable. The production was intended primarily perhaps for Anne Heaton. Owing to Heaton's injury the role was first taken in Spain by a Covent Garden guest artist, Nadia Nerina. Subsequently it was entrusted to Sara Neil.

During the past year Neil has improved almost beyond recognition. Responsibility has worked on her, as it often does, like a charm. Already her Giselle is a most workmanlike portrayal. Naturally at present lacking in originality, it combined a charming first act with a cleanly danced second act. The Mad Scene was convincingly sincere, and the performance in general had a touching air of youthfulness.

Alexander Bennett's Albrecht (Field danced the first English performance) and Margaret Hill's Queen of the Wilis, are both familiar from the Rambert production. Bennett has improved technically, and his stage bearing was beyond reproach. He remains as one of the best English Albrechts. Hill's malevolent Myrthe was equally impressive, and her Bathilde proved exemplary in that it was gracious without being condescending.

Henry Legerton's Hilarion is of the "blood, sweat and simple nobility school" and appears to be somewhat modelled on Leslie Edwards'.

THE RETURN OF LUISILLO: The famous Spanish dancer who, for many years was associated with and partnered Teresa, returns to London to the Prince's Theatre at the end of October.

CAFE FLAMENCO: Luisillo in one of his several flamenco numbers which make up part of his new programme. The company has been enlarged since it was last seen in London at the Stoll Theatre four years ago. Luisillo was at one time one of the leading male dancers in the company of Carmen Amaya.

This is greatly to its advantage and Legerton played it well.

Donald Macleary's Duke and Bryan Lawrence's Wilfred were both a little disappointing. These two promising young dancers have all the physical attributes required, yet youth will out—particularly in mime roles.

Doreen Tempest danced a neat and attractive peasant *pas de deux*, but her partner Donald Britton appeared to be having an off night.

Clive Barnes

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET

Bad programme building

IN what was possibly some kind of a rehearsal for Moscow, Ashton's *Symphonic Variations* turned up on September 13 as the rather slender filling of an unappetising sandwich —between the strong meat of *Noctambules* and *The Miraculous Mandarin*. About as bad a piece of programme arrangement as you could find.

Anya Linden danced Fonteyn's role in *Symphonic Variations* with Rosemary Lindsay and Annette Page on either side of her. Without Fonteyn, the ballet loses immeasurably and all of a sudden it seems old-fashioned. Not that these three ladies did anything other than dance extremely well and Linden, in particular, was better than I have seen her for some time, but Fonteyn's faultless phrasing, her impeccable line and the little touches with which she embellishes the role are essential to a ballet of this kind. Here, adequacy is just not enough.

Somes and Brian Shaw, in their original roles, were as good as they ever have been, while Pirmin Trecu is settling in well as the third person in the male trio.

Even without Fonteyn, it is still possible to admire Ashton's beautiful groups which form, dissolve and re-form in endless variety, and which disperse again to leave each of the six dancers so perfectly placed upon the stage that it never for a second looks unfilled. In the whole history of ballet it is doubtful whether so small a number of dancers has been used to such satisfying effect.

It is hard to know which came off worse —MacMillan's *Noctambules* or Rodrigues' *The Miraculous Mandarin*—by their unhappy juxtaposition in this programme. Both are back-street ballets, both have elements of lust, both have strident modern scores, though Humphrey Searle's stood up in no way to the Bartók. Nor could designer Wakhevitch compete with Nicholas Georgiadis. *Noctambules* suffered from being given as an opening ballet and what merits there are in *The Miraculous Mandarin* were obscured by its coming after *Noctambules*. But there is no doubt that Rodrigues has achieved some moments of fine and inventive choreography and it is a pity that these have been mainly overlooked by those who seemed to have spent most of the ballet's length looking for something to shock them—30 years ago they might have found it.

P.W.

Beryl Grey as Giselle

PHYSICALLY, Beryl Grey is not ideally suited to the role of Giselle. There is nothing wan or frail about her appearance which could suggest that hers is a body unable to withstand any violent shock. She looks far too healthy and practical a peasant girl and, therefore, it seems incredible that she will lose her reason through her lover's deceit.

Markova has been said to personify the spirit of the Romantic ballet and live the role rather than interpret it. Grey must be classified as one of the "interpreters" and her performance is an uneven one. Her style is dramatic rather than lyrical, and her interpretation appears to be drawn from purely emotional sources rather than from any intellectual consideration of the many nuances which the role provides.

In Act I she is coquettish and radiant rather than shy. Her mad scene, however, is very well done; it is restrained in treatment and quite moving, depending more on shivers, giddiness and palpitations than on violent muscular contractions or drunken staggering.

In the second act her dancing, while technically at its best, is a little too vigorous for Giselle and does not convincingly suggest a supernatural being.

Rowena Jackson as the Queen of the Wilis has hardly improved on her earlier performances. While her dancing is probably superior to that of some other performers of the role, and her bearing is emphatically regal, she relies almost entirely on a coldness of manner. There is no tinge of cruelty in her personality, not even in her sharply mimed death sentences. Her attention is so focused on Albrecht that Giselle is almost completely ignored. She must adopt a more positive attitude towards Giselle, for it is Giselle herself whom she commands to entice Albrecht away from the protecting cross.

Philip Chatfield, who has been dancing exceptionally well this season, makes a fervently romantic Albrecht, his partnering is extremely good, his bearing dignified, but his mime is still a trifle casual.

Gerd Larsen is most effective as a tender and sympathetic Bathilde, and Leslie Edwards is still an ardently aggressive Hilarion who, when shaken with grief at the consequences of his meddling, adds considerable balance and meaning to the plot of the first act.

E. C. Mason

Linden in Elvin's role

ANYA LINDEN has taken over Violetta Elvin's role in *Birthday Offering*. That she is not as good as Elvin cannot, I think, be excused by saying that the choreography was intended to display her predecessor's special talents. It is, in fact, technically one of the less demanding *variations*. The difference is one of temperament and style rather than of technique, for Linden dances it very well and comes across with a pleasant smile. She lacks Elvin's personality and ability to take immediate possession of the stage. Elvin was the more showy, but the solos, after all, were designed to show off the company's ballerinas. A shy, demure approach does not therefore seem to be indicated and, as each solo is so brief, a more bravura approach is necessary if the dancer is not to pass unnoticed.

Fifield as Odette-Odile

THE first thing a critic expects of any ballerina assigned the full-length *Swan Lake* is that she should make it perfectly clear that she is interpreting two roles, and not merely two aspects of one character. This requirement rarely seems to be fully grasped by the ballerina who is, invariably, finely schooled down to the last detail of the choreography.

Fonteyn achieves a perfect division between the two, softly swanlike as Odette and glitteringly deceitful as Odile, and yet subtle enough during Rothbart's meaningful signs so as not to make Prince Siegfried aware of her impersonation. Jackson recently achieved a good, but as yet incompletely developed, balance between the roles. Fifield did little more than approach the roles in one rather unvarying mood.

Her dancing was musically phrased and her overall performance was extremely competent. Her best moments were in the second and

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fourth acts. While her third act contained some wonderfully exciting dancing, her interpretation of Odile was rather underplayed, and she seemed to lack a little of her usual technical brilliance. She is no glittering serpent, and she received each of Rothbart's instructions with two perfunctory nods—as if his advice was distracting and quite irrelevant to the ballet.

While she exhibited her usual remarkable poise, she seemed almost restricted by her own self-assurance. If only something would shake her out of herself and provide her with the nervous force to give an exhilarating and electrifying performance! At times there was an air of coldness about her, and a more noticeable quality of remoteness or aloofness towards her partner.

However, my breath was taken away by David Blair's remarkable sequence of perfectly executed turns—*pirouettes*, *grandes pirouettes à la seconde*, and *doubles tours*. To have a ballerina being outshone by the brilliance and control of her partner's dancing was almost a new experience for us.

Gerd Larsen was a sterner, more emphatic Princess-Mother, who has lost nothing of Pamela May's regal authority. Mary Drage and Anya Linden, leading their flight of swans, gave pleasingly graceful performances.

E. C. Mason

Two débuts

ON September 24, Nadia Nerina danced the title rôle of *The Firebird* for the first time The principal rôle in this Stravinsky-Fokine ballet is far more difficult than might be imagined—so much has to be conveyed with such economy of movement. As far as the dancing was concerned, Nerina gave a splendid account of herself. She has fine elevation and her *penchées arabesques* are very grand. Where she failed was in her expressiveness, and I never had the feeling of her being a terrified wild bird when the Prince captures her. A mere fluttering of hands is not enough as fear has to be conveyed through the eyes and the whole line of the body. Although she went through all the movements of the rôle almost faultlessly and she achieved a surface grand manner, there was no feeling that her interpretation was gathering strength from any inner fire. However, for a first performance with little rehearsal it amounted to a formidable effort.

In the same programme, David Blair took over the Michael Somes rôle in Ashton's *Symphonic Variations* for the first time. He danced with the virile manly grace that we expect from the best male dancers and again proved that in him the Wells has a future potential star.

P.W.

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AMERICA

The San Francisco Ballet

INTERESTINGLY enough, in point of years, the San Francisco Ballet is the oldest company performing in this country. Founded in 1933 by Adolph Bolm, this dance group was first an adjunct of that city's opera company. In 1937 William Christensen took over, and in 1941 the ballet became a separate unit with its own staff and building. In 1951 William Christensen resigned to become the first professor of ballet of a State university in this country at the University of Utah. His brother, Harold Christensen, now heads the school which supplies the professional company, while another brother, Lew, assumed directorship of the company with James Graham-Lujan becoming artistic director. This company still appears in the dance sequences in the operas during the season at the War Memorial Opera House. In addition, its own ballet schedule includes a traditional Christmas season and a spring season as well as tours of major western cities.

The first week's programme of the three-week engagement at Ted Shawn's Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival offered George Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco*, the world première of Lew Christensen's *The Dryad*, as well as his *Con Amore*. Set to Schubert's Fantasy in F Minor, *The Dryad* is created in the manner of a 19th-century ballet, and it describes a mystic cult of dryads and their vengeance on a hunter who harms a sacred tree. Centuries later another hunter and his companions come across the dryads' grove, and the vengeful process is again set in motion. Although the prologue is thin, the main scene is noteworthy for some stunning ensemble patterns as well as for a striking *pas de deux* for Hancy Johnson as the Dryad and Richard Carter as the Bowman, and there is striking décor provided by Leonard Weisgard.

Neither *Concerto Barocco* nor *Con Amore* made the impact they might have with a full orchestra (they were accompanied here by duo-pianists), but in performance they were crisp, spirited and technically meticulous. The major asset of this company thus far appears to be its youthfulness—the average age of the performers is nineteen years—exactitude and elegance. Indeed, Walter Terry, commenting on these qualities in the New York *Herald-Tribune*, found them "more meticulous technically than some of our major companies have been on occasion."

In addition to the overall virtues of the company, three soloists, Sally Bailey, Nancy Johnson and Conrad Ludlow have created a strong impression. Sally Bailey's brilliance is noteworthy in her role of Chief of the Amazons in *Con Amore*, while Ludlow's technical prowess and comic gifts are outstanding in the same ballet. Nancy Johnson scores in both this work and *The Dryad*.

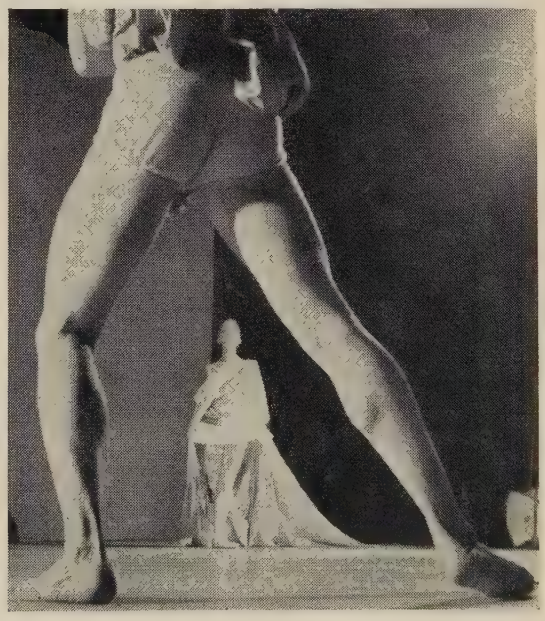
During the second and third weeks of their engagement this appealing young company appeared in *The Tarot*, to Tchaikovsky music and with choreography by Lew Christensen; *Jinx*, *Le Gourmand* and *A Masque of Beauty and the Shepherd*, all with choreography by Lew Christensen; and Balanchine's *Apollo*.

Jose Limon's The Emperor Jones

THE world première of Jose Limon's *The Emperor Jones* took place at the Empire State Music Festival at Ellelville, New York during July. Based on the plot of the Eugene O'Neil play, this new all-male dance work had a

OLDEST AMERICAN COMPANY: Members of the San Francisco Ballet in Lew Christiansen's The Tarot *given at Jacob's Pillow.* Left to right: *(kneeling) Coler, Fuerstner and Arnold; (standing) Lawler, Johnson, Bailey, Ludlow, Bering and Carter.* *Photo: John van Lund*

DISTANT BEAUTY: Nancy Johnson seen through the legs of Conrad Ludlow in Christiansen's A Masque of Beauty and the Shepherd, *also given by San Francisco Ballet.* *Photo: Jack Mitchell*



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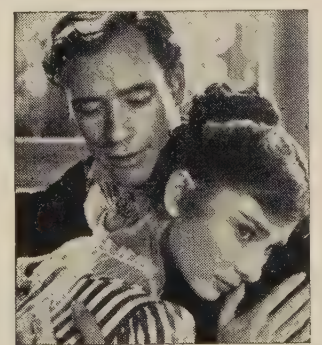

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specially composed score by Heitor Villa-Lobos, the distinguished Brazilian composer. Jose Limon danced the title-role, while Lucas Hoving had the role of the white man whose vision continually haunts the emperor. A male emsemble of six completed the cast, and the colourful costumes were designed by Pauline Limon.

The Royal Danish Ballet

AS was anticipated, the Royal Danish Ballet took New York by storm during its record-breaking two-week engagement at the Metropolitan Opera House during the latter part of September. Certainly no foreign company has so captivated the New York press and public since the Sadler's Wells, and it is now almost a confirmed fact that the company will return to America for a coast-to-coast tour during the autumn of 1957.

La Sylphide and *Graduation Ball* shared the programme for the gala première, and a distinguished capacity audience made this the most fashionable and exciting opening of the month in New York. Quite wisely, the directors of the Royal Danish Ballet decided to introduce themselves to America with one of their own classics that would show off their artistic tradition and standards to full advantage, and their choice served admirably. One chance remark overheard in Sherry's bar during an interval serves to illustrate the consensus of New York public opinion regarding this company: "If ballet is a group of people dancing wonderfully together, then this is it."

Henning Kronstram and Margrethe Schanne danced off with the major personal honours of the evening, although, it must be added, the entire company, and especially the corps, were completely winning. All of the dancers seem to inject a wonderfully warm buoyancy and bounce to everything they do, yet this is kept completely within the framework of their own great tradition. Explaining this in his review in next day's New York *Herald-Tribune*, Walter Terry wrote: "By some miracle (they) preserve that tradition while investing it with contemporary vitality and present technical skill." And what an enchanting ballet *La Sylphide* is. Unfortunately, space requirements make it quite impossible to dwell on the beauties and subtleties of this completely delightful work. Perhaps it is only necessary to add that New York audiences, who were first introduced to the glories of full-length classical ballets by the Sadler's Wells, took this new company and ballet completely into their hearts.

MALE CLASS: Members of the Royal Danish Ballet preparing in New York for their season at the Metropolitan Opera House. In the foreground is Henning Kronstam; one from back, in the air, is Fredbjorn Bjornsson.

Napoli, which is apparently one of the company's favourite works, failed to win quite the same admiration from New Yorkers. "It is a foolish old piece of pure theatrical corn," wrote John Martin in the *New York Times*, "but wonderfully endearing because it brings alive the naive day when the theatre was unabashedly devoted to tricks, sentiment and the creation of happy illusion." Though general audiences found the first two acts slow, everyone seemed to agree that there was more than enough fine dancing in the third to carry almost any ballet.

Chopiniana, this company's version of *Les Sylphides*, was another ballet that seemed monotonous to some, especially since other companies have realised its poetic qualities more successfully. On the other hand, however, *La Sonnambula*, better known to us as Balanchine's *Night Shadow*, was given a brilliant performance with Henning Kronstram dancing and miming the rôle of the Poet magnificently. This, certainly, was a performance to rank in importance with George Skibine's memorable interpretation given during the de Cuevas season back in 1949. Also noteworthy were Margrethe Schanne's performances of the sleepwalker's rôle, Mona Vangsaa as the Coquette and Borge Ralov as the Baron.

Also well received was the company's version of *Coppélia*. Though differing in many aspects from other presentations of recent memory, the Danish dancers mime and dance it in a wonderful manner and Inge Sande made her best impression of the season in the name rôle, with strong support provided by Niels Bjorn Larsen and Fredbjorn Bjornsson.

Dream Pictures, which has a particularly nostalgic effect on all those who have visited Copenhagen and the Tivoli Gardens, came off in New York as a non-exportable ballet, although it had two or three commendable sections. Though I was fortunate enough to see two performances of *La Sylphide*, *Napoli* and *Romeo and Juliet*, it was not possible to see either *Petrouchka* or *Konservatoriet*, but I can say that both were well received.

Although the Danish ballet tradition as exemplified by *La Sylphide* and *Napoli* had a justifiably popular success with New York audiences, it must be added that the contemporary graphic honours of this season go to Frederick Ashton's modern masterpiece, *Romeo and Juliet*, and quite certainly Henning Kronstram's portrayal of Romeo was inspired in every way. Similarly, Mona Vangsaa's Juliet was luminous and exquisite, and she scored a like triumph in this, her major rôle of the season. Kirsten Petersen scored a similar

BOURNONVILLE REHEARSAL: Hans Brenaa conducts a half-dress rehearsal for the New York season. Among those in the background can be seen Kirsten Ralov, in Spanish costume, and Henning Kronstam. Brenaa is the Bournonville authority of the three Royal Danish Ballet producers.

success in her two performances in the rôle of Juliet.

Ashton has met the challenge of Prokofiev's score, and it has served him admirably in both the large scale scenes, particularly the one of the fatal duels, as well as in the more intimate balcony scene and in the *pas de deux* in the bed-chamber. Like all of Ashton's great works, this ballet is brimming over with inventiveness in actual dance movement as well as mime, and everywhere there is evidence of his innate musicality. Hailing this new Ashton ballet in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, Walter Terry wrote: "It is strange—perhaps the whim of the Muses—that England's greatest choreographer should mould his masterwork for the Danes." After seeing all the major ballets shown in New York the past two decades, I believe that Ashton's *Romeo and Juliet* is the major classical ballet of our generation. Interestingly enough, although Ashton has shown complete respect to both the Shakespearean script and the magnificent Prokofiev score, he has also managed to produce a work that superbly fits the talents of this superb company.

Musicals on and off Broadway

"*The Littlest Revue*, which played its pre-arranged six-week season as the closing bill at the Phoenix Theatre, was choreographed by Charles Weidman, who designed some fresh and sparkling dances for this company of young performers. Outstanding was Dorothy Jarnac's pantomomic dance in a shop window that had surrealistic hands popping out through the walls.

The Most Happy Fella, the musical version of *They Knew What They Wanted*, is more a folk-opera than a musical, and it is the only other major hit in New York at the moment apart from *My Fair Lady*. Its locale is in the grape-growing Napa Valley in California and the wonderful challenge for a series of colourful folk dances has not been met by choreographer Dania Krupska.

John Heawood, remembered for his wonderful dances for *The Boy Friend*, has staged all the dance numbers in *Sticks and Stones*, an intimate revue starring Hermione Gingold, that has been touring the summer circuit.

Three major musicals coming to New York before Christmas have already announced their choreographers. Jerome Robbins will direct the entire production as well as stage the dances for *The Bells Are Ringing*, starring Judy Holiday. Michael Kidd is to direct the dances and musical numbers for *L'i'l Abner* and Alex Romero will do the same for *Happy Hunting*, the new Ethel Mermen musical.

Arthur Todd

FRANCE

THE PARIS OPERA

THE ballet company made its reappearance at the Opéra on September 19 in a programme in tribute to past glories. Madeleine Lafon again showed herself to be a remarkable interpreter of Swanilda in *Coppélia*. Paulette Dynalix played opposite her in the travesty role of Franz, and Raymond Franchetti was Coppelius. This was followed by *La Tragédie de Salomé* in which Lycette Darsonval repeated her recent triumph as Salomé, and finally, in *Soir de Fête*, Christine Vaussard enjoyed a success equal to that which greeted her when this ballet was revived in July.

The dancers' contracts had expired and were due to be renewed or not before the end of September. At the time of writing it was difficult to foresee what the coming season has in store. A production has been planned of the oratorio by Debussy and Gabriele d'Annunzio, *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien*, with choreography by Lifar and sets by Félix Labisse. Ludmilla Tcherina is to play the role formerly created by Ida Rubinstein. The engagment of Léonide Massine and George Balanchine has also been announced, but no details have been given. Massine is expected to revive *La Symphonie Fantastique* with the original Bérard sets.

FESTIVALS IN FRANCE

FROM July 21, the third international Dance Festival of Aix-les-Bains took place at the Théâtre du Casino and the Théâtre de Verdure in the Parc des Thermes. The first evening was given over to the Spanish Ballet of Roberto Ximenez and Manolo Vargas. The Paris Opéra Ballet presented Balanchine's *Le Palais de Cristal*, and Lifar's *Variations* and *Grand Pas*, and Yvette Chauviré and Youly Algaroff gave a *Giselle* in the purest romantic style. For her part Lycette Darsonval, partnered by Gerard Ohn, interpreted *Atala* which she had herself choreographed to Beethoven's *Leonore* No. 3 Overture.

While folk-dancing was represented by the Hungarian State Dance Company and Keita Fodéba's African Ballet, Ludmilla Tcherina in a recital performed *La Danse des morts d'amour* from Tomasi's opera *L'Atlantide*, *Le Cygne* by Saint-Saëns, and *A la Mémoire d'un héros*, arranged by Lifar to the *andante* movement from Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony. Finally, Jean Babilée's young company was applauded in *Balance à trois*, and the festival ended with some performances by the company of the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels. On the occasion of the revival of Rameau's *Platée* at the festival at Aix-en-Provence, John Taras arranged the *divertissements* in good taste. They were well danced by Janine Monnin and Henning Kronstam.

At the Casino, Deauville, the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas gave a short season in August. Rosella Hightower, Andréa Karlsen and Wladimir Skouratoff have appeared in a new work called *Le Pont*.

At the Avant-Garde Festival organised at the end of August on the roof-terrace of the Le Corbusier block at Marseilles, Maurice Béjart produced a ballet called *Teck*, in which he and Michèle Seigneuret appeared.

Marie-Françoise Christout

Ballet Dates

THE BOLSHOI BALLET
at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Oct.
22 *Romeo and Juliet*
23 *Romeo and Juliet*
24 *Le Lac des Gygnes*
25 *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*
26 *Le Lac des Cygnes*
27 (M at 1.30 p.m.) *Romeo and Juliet*
27 (E) *Romeo and Juliet*
29 *Le Lac des Cygnes*

at Davis Theatre, Croydon

Oct. 31, Nov. 1 and 2 Concert performances including Ulanova in *The Dying Swan* and *Chopin Waltz*, Struchkova in *Moskowsky Waltz* and *Walpurgisnacht*, with other artists and *corps de ballet* at each performance.

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
Tour

Oct.
15 Hippodrome, Coventry (2 weeks)
29 New Theatre, Oxford
Nov.
15 The Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow
Dec.
21 The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Oct.
22 The Royal Court, Liverpool
29 Alhambra Theatre, Glasgow
Nov.
5 Her Majesty's, Aberdeen
12 King's Theatre, Edinburgh
19 Globe, Stockton-on-Tees
16 New Theatre, Hull
Dec.
3 Theatre Royal, Nottingham

BALLET RAMBERT

Nov.
26 (for 3 weeks) Scottish Arts Council Tour

FESTIVAL BALLET

Oct.
8 The Palace, Manchester (2 weeks)
22 Alhambra Theatre, Bradford
29 The Hippodrome, Bristol
Nov.
5 Theatre Royal Birmingham (2 weeks)
19 Dublin and Belfast (2 weeks)
Dec.
3 Empire Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
19-Jan. 19. Stoll Theatre, London. First programme, *Coppelia*

ANTONIO AND HIS SPANISH BALLET
at the Palace Theatre, London
Sept. 18 to Nov 10

RAM GOPAL AND HIS INDIAN BALLET
at the Hippodrome Theatre London
Oct. 8-27

LUISILLO and his SPANISH DANCE THEATRE
at Prince's Theatre, London
Oct. 31 to Nov. 24

JOSE GRECO AND HIS SPANISH BALLET
at the Royal Festival Hall London
Dec. 24 for 3 weeks

WHERE THE RAINBOW ENDS, at the London Coliseum
Dec. 20 for 3 weeks (mats. only)
Christmas play with ALICIA MARKOVA in a new ballet by Keith Lester. ANTON DOLIN as St. George.

DANCE LECTURES
at the Pushkin Club, Nov. 2nd
The Bolshoi Ballet in London, by Peter Williams

at St. Luke's South Hall, Chelsea
Oct. 28
The Development of Dance in Greece by Mimika Martaki Shepherd
Nov. 25
The Dancing Sculptures of India by Eilean Pearcey

ANNA PAVLOVA COMMEMORATIVE EXHIBITION
at the London Museum
Sept. 4 to Dec. 31

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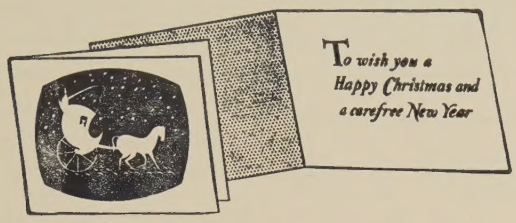

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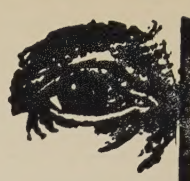

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